

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

NOVEMBER, 1931

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Photograph and Poem by Marie Louise Allen

FAR, FAR AWAY

In every story-book or rhyme,
It happens "Once-upon-a-time,
Far, far away!"

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

For the Advancement of Nursery—Kindergarten—Primary Education

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NOVEMBER, 1931

No. 3

The Poetry Hour

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I know how poems come.
They have wings.
When you are not thinking of it
I suddenly say
"Mother, a poem!"
Somehow I hear it
Rustling.

Poems come like boats
With sails for wings:
Crossing the sky swiftly
They slip under tall bridges
Of cloud.

HILDA CONKLING—"Poems," in *Shoes of the Wind*.

IN a series of direct strokes Hilda Conkling has set down as completely as well can be, her own experience in making poetry. After the fashion of poets, she has suggested perhaps more than she actually says. For these simple lines offer an exact statement of that process which is so closely akin to the making of poetry,—the appreciation of it. A poem read long ago or just yesterday comes winging its way back from out of

nowhere of our unconscious into our conscious experience at the most unexpected moment. Instant recognition greets the unmistakable "rustling" of its rhythms in one's inner ears; there is the moment of intense, pleasurable contemplation, and then the poem slips back behind its own cloud. The lover of poetry knows the joy and illumination of many such moments. The delight of them makes him an avid reader of poetry in books, for he wants to enrich and deepen his store of poetic experiences. One may venture to say that Hilda Conkling's "Poems" provides a kind of poetic text for those older readers who would share more completely their own satisfaction in poetry with children. Children whose ears are attuned to the rhythms of verse often break forth with a spontaneous repetition of the nursery rhymes or lyrics which come "rustling" into their minds when they "are not thinking of it," and for them such moments of listening and remembering are swift and luminous.

In a way the appreciation of poetry is very simple. One reads and repeats lovely

poetry to children; they rarely talk much about it, but their eyes glisten; they sit quietly, sometimes leaning forward a little: they ask to hear the poems over and again; presently they are saying the lines along with the reader, or coming forth with a delightful repetition of entire selections. The typical reaction of children to poetry in the early years of childhood is admirably described by Elsie Fogerty:¹ ". . . they do not like very much sense-emphasis in the lines they speak; they would rather sing-song the metre: and when they speak a poem which really appeals to them, if they know and love you well enough to let you hear, they like to stand very still and the only expression they show is of their own shy delight in what they are speaking."

The sympathetic teacher listens quietly to the repetition of all poems, she knows that too much comment or even praise takes the edge from off the experience for children. She knows how to be casual. To be sure she does not always understand just why a particular poem is repeated, but she accepts it for she knows that it must have an association for the child. She takes note of the favorites and judiciously offers new poems that seem to fit in well with the growing store of verses and rhythms. Now and then she may suggest, "I have found this poem," and the children usually invited her to read it to them. Children who are so fortunate as to have this kind of wise literary guidance grow naturally and happily into possession of their poetic heritage.

But for many children the acquaintance with poetry is not a joyous unfolding of experiences and for many teachers far from a simple matter. In this article a few suggestions are offered which may help those teachers who are trying to make the poetry hour with children more nearly the time for wonder and contemplation it should be.

To read poetry to children quietly,

pleasantly and without fussy or sententious comment may require a certain courage on the part of the teacher, more especially if it "hasn't been done that way" in one's particular, pedagogical midst. It may require even more courage to discard the routine of the so-called "appreciation lesson." But the rewards for such bravery are great and satisfying. The sensitive reader knows what it means to have a wealth of poetic suggestion in one's own mind, to have the magic of poetry suddenly reveal itself, to feel the charm of deepening associations, and she wants children to share in these beautiful imaginative experiences. As has been said, the first step towards the appreciation of poetry comes through hearing it until one's ears catch the music of verse and the listener begins to feel something of the inner sense of word-pictures. In this type of reading poetry sounds like poetry,—that is, the verse pattern, the shape of the poem, so to speak, stand out clearly in the rhythmical utterance of the reader. Attention to fine detail distinguishes the appreciative oral reading of poetry, such as carrying over the end of one line to the next by means of a delicate intonation, keeping a subtle stress for the verbs, and blending the adjective into the noun. The discriminating reader of verse knows how to apply concretely in interpretive practice Coleridge's famous definition of poetry, "the best words in the best order."

To an ear accustomed to the harmonies of "the best order" of "the best words," there is little likelihood of intellectual misapprehension. Good listening makes for clear understanding. There is no possible excuse for dismembering poems by taking single words or phrases from the context of the selection and introducing prosaic definitions which destroy the meaning of the poem. The query comes, "But the children ask what the words mean. Isn't it necessary to answer their questions?" This type of question simply goes to prove how fundamental it is that children should

¹Fogerty, Elsie: *The Speaking of English Verse*, p. 153. Dutton, 1923.

have experience in listening. Curiously enough, the children who have no idea of how to listen have often been read to a great deal by adults whose reading is faulty in the matter of rhythmical phrasing. As Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has well said: "All great literature is gentle toward that spirit which learns of it. It teaches by apprehension, not comprehension." To the plea that "children do not understand," the answer is give them first a fair chance to see poems and stories as wholes. It is extraordinary how the application of this simple principle clears away comprehension difficulties in the appreciation of literature.

Why do so many older people stiffen, inwardly at least, at mention of the term poem? One strongly suspects that they are among the unhappy thousands who have been forced to memorize one poem per month; who have grimly committed edifying lines as an in-school-imposed-after-hours form of discipline; who have struggled to insert in "written compositions" the "nice" words which originally appeared in a poem but have been made to glare at them from the blackboard in the form of a list; and perhaps, saddest of all, have struggled to formulate brief and harmless answers to the question "Why do you like it?" We are always assuming that no one is doing this sort of thing in these progressive days, but nevertheless it is a fact that in many schools poetry continues to suffer from just such mistreatment. These hapless procedures might be interpreted as a reflection of the Puritanism of other generations when verse for children consisted chiefly of didactic bits designed to remind the young of the necessity of conforming to patterns of behavior dictated largely by adult notions of convenience and propriety. This Puritanical attitude lives on in the determination with which some people look for lessons in verse and in much of our mistaken zeal for a strict and immediate accounting for preferences. If childhood is to escape these spiritual blights, then the applica-

tion of the principles of modern psychology to teaching need to be reinforced by a broad acquaintance with literature and a better knowledge of literary standards.

Where to begin is a question. Perhaps the surest way is to keep on familiar ground. Children may be encouraged to repeat the nursery rhymes they happen to know, which is something they invariably enjoy doing. Then the teacher may join in the fun by offering bits that are reminiscent of the Mother Goose rhythms, such as "The Little Turtle" by Vachel Lindsay, "Mix a Pancake," by Christina Rossetti, or "Alas, Alack," by Walter de la Mare. The eager conversation of children about the things of their own world makes numerous opportunities for introducing seemingly just by the way, favorites such as "The Hairy Dog" and "The House of Dogs," by Herbert Asquith, "The Goldfish," "Clouds," "Snow," and "Ice," by Dorothy Aldis, "Cat" and "Kitten," by Mary Britton Miller, and "The Mysterious Cat," and "The Potatoes' Dance," by Vachel Lindsay. Of course *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*, by A. A. Milne, and *Sing-Song*, by Christina Rossetti, are usually read from cover to cover. An anthology, possibly the charming *Silver Pennies*, provides many delightful surprises and rich associations. From this kind of a beginning children progress naturally to *Peacock Pie* and *Songs of Childhood*, by Walter de la Mare, *Under the Tree*, by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and perhaps bits from *Songs of Innocence*, by William Blake. If listening to good poetry is a part of daily experience, if the teacher is discerning in choosing the right moment for new impressions, a lasting love of poetry is established. Children to whom the sound of poetry is familiar welcome with zest encounters with it on the printed page. The store of remembered rhythms in one's mind helps tremendously in the more complex process of getting one's poetry directly from the printed page. Moreover, there is a new kind of pleasure for the

young reader in the discovery that he can read his favorite poems for himself.

If one is dealing with children for whom poetry has been spoiled by unimaginative approaches, it is well to remember that surprises are always in order. With a group of children who flatly refused to listen to poetry so unpleasant were their past associations with it, a wise teacher made no effort to force it upon them. She made the classroom experiences interesting for them in other ways, and helped with the one thing that claimed attention, the making of a city. One afternoon she read quite casually Rachel Field's.

"Skyscraper" from Pointed People:

Do skyscrapers ever grow tired
Of holding themselves up high?
Do they ever shiver on frosty nights
With their tops against the sky?
Do they feel lonely sometimes
Because they have grown so tall?
Do they ever wish they could lie right
down
And never get up at all?

Eyes turned to the visions of the city's tall towers which could be seen from the windows of the classroom. One youngster nodded and remarked: "That's like them." The children talked a little about the familiar sight and noted details hitherto unobserved, and in the conversation the teacher caught the words "shiver," "tops against the sky," and "lie right down." The next day drawings appeared here and there of skyscrapers in dizzy positions and some of them literally lying "right down." Explanations were forthcoming: "It's like what you read." And the request came to hear again "about skyscrapers." The teacher followed up her advantage with other selections from Rachel Field's books of verse. From *Pointed People* she read "City Lights," "Rain in the City," and "The Old Postman," and from *Taxis and Toadstools*, "The Good Green Bus," "At the Theatre," and "Taxis." Later in the year the same group of chil-

dren claimed as favorite books *When We Were Very Young*, *Under the Tree*, *Silver Pennies*, *Everything and Anything*, and *Fairies and Chimneys*. They had enjoyed a good deal of *Peacock Pie* and *Songs of Childhood*. Some of them had made verses of their own with evident pleasure. For them "poem" had become a word full of charm and delight. We may begin wherever children happen to be, but we should sympathetically and intelligently help them to develop in their own way a taste for finer things.

That cultivation of taste develops in this way is well illustrated in the following instance: For two years a young teacher had made poetry alluring for a group of children in a pleasant, informal fashion. They liked good things and some of them had written verses. One day at the beginning of the poetry hour she said to them, "Poetry helps us to see people and the things we know in new ways," and by way of making her suggestion concrete she read the following selections from *Under the Tree* in the sequence indicated: "People Going By," "Strange Tree," and "The Rabbit." The reactions of the children were significant. "I hear their feet," and "Each one walks differently," were among the comments on "People Going By." They closed their eyes during the reading of "Strange Tree" "to see it better," and for one child it was "like a tree I saw in the country." Just for fun, "The Rabbit" was read without announcing its title, so that it was jolly to guess the title from the suggestion in the lines,

"He hopped his way through the melon-bed
And sat down close by a cabbage head."

Literary adventures of this type go to show how sensitive children may become in their appreciation of poetic image and mood, and how direct and simple are the approaches which bring about the unconscious cultivation of taste in poetry.

Obviously we may hope to achieve these fine ends only with the help of genuine

poetry. Much of the verse children like best is simple in form and subject but it is indubitably poetic in all its parts. The bookshelf of poetry for the younger children will not at best hold many volumes, but each one of them will offer its readers enrichment of imaginative experience. With Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes as a point of departure, we may add as seems best the books of poetry made by Christina Rossetti, A. A. Milne, and Vachel Lindsay. In a little while we shall surely be ready to enjoy the poetry of Elizabeth Madox Roberts and Walter de la Mare. We will not forget Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*, but we will remember that its wistful note makes its appeal to children a little beyond the first stage of interest in poetry. There is plenty of room for individual choice in the variety to be found in verses of Rose Fyleman, Nancy Byrd Turner, Dorothy Aldis, Herbert Asquith, and Rachel Field. Presently children will be ready for one of the immortal books of childhood, Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. Good anthologies will help to provide for the varied emotional appeal that is so essential in giving a sense of companionship with poetry. *Silver Pennies* and *Ring A'Round* collections are well calculated to please the younger children. For a touch of pure nonsense we may add *Porridge Poetry*, by Hugh Lofting, and possibly *The Tale of Mr. Tootleoo*, by Bernard and Elinor Darwin. We shall be hospitably inclined to greet any real additions to the poetry bookshelf. Recently we have had the pleasure of adding to the shelf the delicately fanciful *Out of the Everywhere*, by Winifred Howard, and the finely wrought and original *Skippping Along Alone*, by Winifred Welles. Both books promise to win fervent admirers among young readers. Again, it is another kind of satisfaction to welcome the return of an old favorite wearing a brighter dress with which to catch the eye of a new generation, as happened when William Alling-

ham's *Robin Redbreast* appeared in the Little Library with all the quaint pictures by Helen Allingham and Kate Greenaway which had charmed in one's own childhood.

Above all else we should never forget that the enjoyment of poetry is an end in itself. There is not the slightest justification for using it as a device for teaching other things. "Keeping within the experience of children" offers no defense for the use of literal or commonplace verse.

That direct vision of things that is so essentially the child's point of view is also the poet's way of seeing his world. Children find their way easily in this world provided we give them time for contemplation of its wonders. The poetry hour should offer children an interval when they may await the "rustling" of poems, when they may live for a little while under the spell of poetry. Children need the influence of its patterns in their thought. Bit by bit its rhythms and images blend into an order which helps to make for harmony and completeness in the imaginative life.

A bibliography of the books of poetry for younger children mentioned in this article is added.

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ASQUITH, HERBERT. *Pillicock Hill*; il. by A. H. Watson. Macmillan, 1926.

BLAKE, WILLIAM. *The Land of Dreams*; il. with drawings by Pamela Bianco. Macmillan, 1928.—Perhaps the most easily available among the attractive editions of Blake for children. *Songs of Innocence*. Minton, 1926. A replica copy of the British Museum copy of the first edition of *Songs of Innocence*, made by Blake himself in 1789.

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(Continued on page 162)

Poems Suggested by Nursery School Children

MARY LOUISE ALLEN

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IT is a pleasure to introduce Miss Allen's poems and pictures to readers of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. How she happened to choose her subjects is of special interest.

In each case the poem was suggested by spontaneous comments of the nursery school children. On the playground, at the dinner table, in the dressing-room. Miss Allen jotted down vivid bits of the children's conversation only to turn it into poem form later.

Mary Ellen, verbalizing the exact technique of putting on her mittens, chanted over and over, "Thumbs in the thumb place, fingers in the finger place." This emerged as "The Mitten Song" and was a favorite with all the children.

Peggy walked around one day, singing dreamily, "Far, far away, far, far, away." Miss Allen turned this into a poem that carries the meditative mood of Peggy's chant.

Norman, always interested in numbers, was fascinated with all the numerical problems presented by his fifth birthday. Said he: "Now I'm five and I'll never be four again, and I'll never be three and I'll never be two and I'll never be *one*. That's when I started. What'll be next after I'm five? I guess I'll be six. I haven't been that." From this came "Five Years Old" which delighted Norman and the other children as well. So with each of these charming poems.

The pictures are Miss Allen's own kodak records made to illustrate her poems.

MAY HILL,

Western Reserve University.



THE MITTEN SONG

(To be chanted)

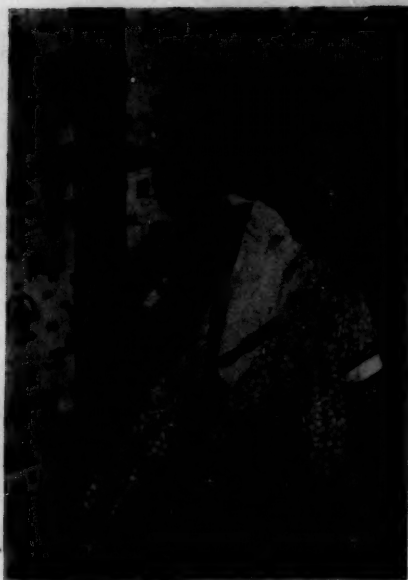
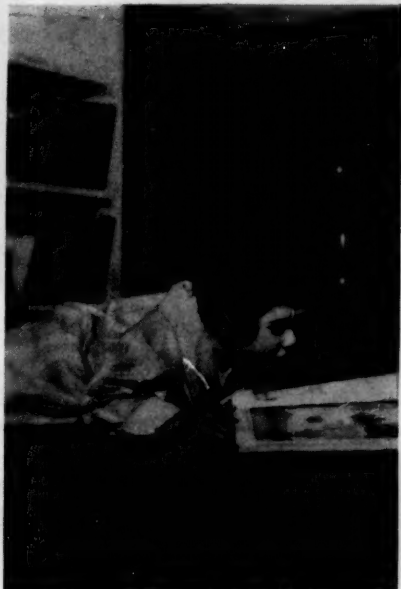
"Thumbs in the thumb-place,
Fingers all together!"
This is the song
We sing in mitten-weather.
When it is cold,
It doesn't matter whether
Mittens are wool,
Or made of finest leather—
This is the song
We sing in mitten-weather:
"Thumbs in the thumb-place,
Fingers all together!"

FAR, FAR AWAY

In every story-book or rhyme,
It happens "Once-upon-a-time,
Far, far away!"

Far, far away! Far, far away
Is where the story-people stay.
Miss Muffet eats her curds and whey
Far, far away!
Little Boy Blue sleeps in the hay
Far, far away!
When Old King Cole is feeling gay,
He calls his fiddlers in to play,
Far, far away!
And all that Tom could pipe, they say,
Was "Far, Far Away!"

Far, far away! Far, far away
Are folks from story-books, and they
All live forever and a day,
Far, far away!



DONKEYS

I've pictures on my handkerchief
Of little donkeys, playing;
And when I have to blow my nose,
I make it sound like braying!

THE ELEPHANT

His ears are big and thin.
He has loose, wrinkly skin.
And the longest nose—
Like garden hose—
To catch the peanuts in!

FIVE YEARS OLD

Please, everybody, look at me!
Today I'm *five* years old, you see!
And after this, I won't be four,
Not ever, ever, anymore!
I won't be three—or two—or one,
For that was when I'd first begun.
But after I am five a while,
I guess it's pretty certain I'll
Be something else. Perhaps I'll get
To six, for I've not been *that* yet!



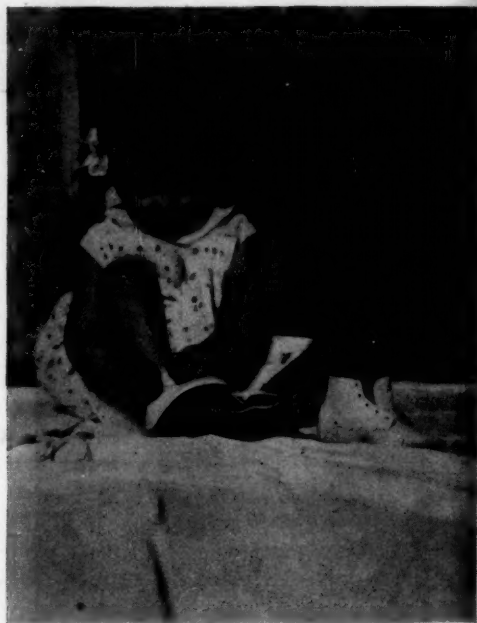
MY ZIPPER-SUIT

My zipper-suit is bunny-brown—
The top zips up, the legs zip down.
I wear it every day.
My Daddy brought it out from town—
Zip it up, and zip it down,
And hurry out to play!



SITTING

When I get tired of standing up
And want to sit somewhere,
It isn't any fun at all
Just sitting on a *chair*—
The place I always like to sit
Is on the bottom stair!



FOOT NOTE

If I were to choose,
I would *never* wear shoes!
It takes such a great deal of care
To criss-cross the laces
In just the right places—
I'd rather my feet were left bare!

The Place of the Folk Tale Today

MAY HILL

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THE folk tale, appropriately enough, has become the Cinderella of children's literature today. It is sometimes neglected, frequently condemned, and seldom given the approbation of polite, pedagogical society. Indeed, to defend folk tales to the modern realist is almost as scandalous as glorifying instincts to a behaviorist. In the eyes of the opposition, both brand the protagonist as out-moded and retrogressive. Yet even ten years ago, the folk tale was the most popular literary offering dealt out to young children by teachers, story-tellers, publishing houses and the ever-busy compilers of first readers, second readers and likewise third and fourth readers. Now the emphasis is on realistic stories and fact reading, with a liberal dose of poetry to leaven the lump. What has brought about the change, what is the case against the folk tale, what, if any, should be the place of folk stories in the literature of the modern child?

One factor influencing the modern attitude towards the folk tale is our own blundering misuse of this material in the past fifteen or twenty years. We began by overdoing the presentation of a comparatively limited number of stories. In the kindergarten a child was told *The Three Billy Goats*, presently he was asked to retell it and then dramatize it. All this happened to him again in the first grade, and in the second grade he was supposed to be overjoyed at reading this tale for himself. This is not an exaggeration. Indeed the same thing was true of a dozen other equally naive little tales that our nursery schools are finding the three and four-year-olds assimilate with no intellectual strain. Moreover, children having listened to adequate versions of these stories told by their mothers and their teach-

ers were put to reading attenuated adaptations of them, reduced to the necessary starkness of first or second grade reading ability. When you consider also that the folk tale was the chief prose literature offered to children from the kindergarten to the third grade, it is little wonder that both the child and the teacher reached a point of complete satiety with the Henny-Pennys, and the trilogies of pigs, bears, and billy goats that made up their chief literary fare.

Other reasons for the present revulsion against the folk tale are certain changes in our adult interests and attitudes. The average adult today is more concerned with science, exploration, world figures than ever before. Newspapers and inexpensive magazines have enormously increased the scope of fact reading for the average adult. With this goes, quite naturally, a diminishing interest in less objective themes. The churches know the modern skepticism towards the old theology. It is not surprising that Santa Claus and fairies are suffering an eclipse.

Moreover, the field of laboratory psychology, with its studies of children's fears, and how children learn, is influencing our more intelligent parents and teachers. In the beginning, it made us all a bit self-conscious and even fearful. We became over-analytical and humorless in our approach to these about-to-be-conditioned children. No one had proved objectively the damaging effect of fairy tales on the susceptible young, but then, no one had proved their worth either; so it seemed best to play safe and let them alone. As a result of the new psychology more people studied children and it became obvious even to the most obtuse that the child is intensely interested in his everyday world of automobiles, elevators,

policemen, postmen and the like. All this gave an impetus to the growing emphasis on the "Here and Now" for children.

We owe this significant phrase to Mrs. Lucy Sprague Mitchell. Her pioneer experiment in realistic, modern stories made with and for the young child has done much to clarify our fuzzy thinking about the child's interests and to point the way to further exploration of the everyday environment for story themes. That it also helped discredit much of the folk tale material is something to be thankful for; so blundering has been our use of it, so excessive our misuse of it. In the years following the publication of Mrs. Mitchell's significant book there have been many criticisms of the folk tales as material for children and these criticisms must be thoughtfully considered.

First, it is said that folk tales having been told by adults for adults are unchildlike in content. Examine any source book of folk tales and this is obviously true from the Decameron to Grimm. The people who created these tales knew mating, birth and death. They dealt often with such themes as jealousy, infidelity, avarice; themes that are obviously unfit for children from every standpoint. That many of the old tales are coarse, bloody, full of deceit and knavery is evident to any reader. These were savage virtues perhaps, but certainly have no place in modern ideals. It seems evident that such stories as *The Master Thief*, *Bluebeard* and even *Snow White* are undesirable material for the kindergarten-primary children.

However, many students of source material also found stories so simple and naive as to seem made for little children. Much of the humor of these simpler folk tales is of the broad, horseplay variety that a young child adores. The pig gets into the churn, rolls down hill and frightens his enemy. This is grotesque and funny to a child. Such phrases as "While I go over to *Squintums*," "No, not by the hair on my chinny-chin-chin" tickle the

child's sound sense. The ginger-bread boy pops out of the oven and runs away, as every child likes to run, causing much racing and chasing on the part of discomfited adults. This is both droll and satisfying. Moreover, animals talk and what they say becomes much funnier because they are animals. In one of our recent good books on children's literature is the prophecy that the talking-beast tale may possibly play a smaller part in the children's literature of the future. This may be true, but when at the movies I hear the gusts of laughter that shake both children and adults when Krazy-Kat paces the screen, I am not so sure. Krazy-Kat and the Silly Symphonies suggest that birds and animals are perennially humorous when used as grotesque prototypes of human beings.

Considering the humor of these old tales it is evident that one of the outstanding weaknesses of the modern realistic stories for children is their paucity of humor. From the Rollo Books to 1931 we tend to grow humorless and improving when we turn realistic. *Angus and the Ducks* and *Poppy Seed Cakes* prove this is not necessarily so, but until we get more realistic stories with some bounce and nonsense about them we had best cling to a few of our old drolls.

Two other conspicuous qualities of the simpler folk tales that are especially dear to young children are their sense of poetic justice and their abundant action. The young child, who is painfully learning property rights, is amused and pleased when the stick begins to beat the thieving landlord until he jumps over tables and chairs yelling with pain and repentance. This is obviously as it should be. It is also suitable that the industrious, kindly sister should win a shower of gold, while pitch pours down on the lazy, deceitful sister. The young child is in a stage where rewards and punishments play an important part. Such brilliant contrasts as gold and pitch he may not have encountered but his experiences with candy and

spankings make them entirely comprehensible.

He also understands and delights in the continuous action of these old tales. Pancakes run away and a whole family together with the barnyard take up the chase. Lassies travel to the castle that lies east o' the sun and west o' the moon. Lads slay dragons, storm castles and make the princess laugh. Things happen in these old tales and action still remains a necessary ingredient in the life and the literature of the young child.

We must admit frankly then that a large proportion of folk literature is adult in theme and treatment and therefore totally unfit for children. To any student of this material, however, there remains a delightful body of stories simple in theme and pattern, rich in humor, satisfying in the sense of justice administered, and above all, full of action, that makes many of them good material for part of the child's literary experience.

Another complaint of the folk tales is that their plots and patterns are too finished and therefore too sophisticated for the child to make his own. Again, the fault seems to be with us rather than with the folk tales. Nothing could be worse than the old insistence that a child must be able to retell the stories he has heard. Mrs. Baruch, in her significant article in this number, wisely calls attention to the stilted and halting story-telling that results when a young child is asked to retell one of these old tales. She is right. The results are about comparable to our adult achievements if we were asked to retell *The Fall of the House of Usher* or *Silas Marner*. This criticism, however, is pertinent to our methods rather than to the material. Just as we sing to children words and melodies too complicated for their reproduction, so quite properly should we read or tell them stories beyond their level of achievement. It will be years before they grow up to performing much of the music they love at four, six and eight years old. Every-

one takes this for granted with music where there is a clear line of demarcation between music for appreciation and the simple one to four-line songs the child himself can sing. We need a similarly clear sense of demarcation in literature between material for the child's enjoyment and the simple, somewhat formless material on his own level of creativity. To give him nothing but this latter type of material is as limiting as to give him no music that he cannot reproduce, or no pictures that he cannot paint.

Most of our children will not grow up to be authors but we hope they will grow up to be consumers of authors' wares. We have no objective studies to prove that the child who enjoys the folk tale, with its careful organization, its exact plot developments, will therefore make a more discriminating selection of short stories and novels at the adult level. We do know, however, that adults who are thoroughly saturated with folk literature are having a difficult time accepting seriously the attenuated themes, the feeble organization, the imitated patterns that characterize some of our realistic stories for children today. There are notable exceptions, of course, and the body of realistic stories grows steadily in quantity and quality. It will, however, remain thin stuff unless the authors realize that children can assimilate with complete enjoyment and understanding themes and patterns that are well beyond their level of production or reproduction.

The last criticism of the folk tale that I shall consider is that the language, episodes and characters are too un-modern to help the child in his understanding of modern life. There is an obvious element of truth in this. Possibly Mother Goose and the folk tales are as doomed for the child as the Greek tragedies and Shakespeare are for the 1931 model adult. A few extenuating points in favor of preserving at least a small body of traditional material may be pardoned.

Many a city child has had as much per-

sonal contact with kings, cinder lads, fairies and goose girls as he has with aviators, farmers, lawyers, Hopi Indians, and miners. Yet he may know both groups vicariously with a more or less correct understanding. As a city-bred youngster I had never met a churn or a chimney-sweep outside literature, but I remember yet the thrill of immediate identification the first time I encountered these two. We do not ride up glass hills, slay giants or outwit trolls, but the qualities of persistence, courage and quick thinking are comprehensible to any intelligent child. Familiarity with "hath, doth, goody, begone knave, damsel, your majesty" may not help interpret the automobile, but they make Shakespeare easy reading. The folk tale is full of well-turned phrases that may not interpret modern life but catch the child's ear and, for some children at least, form the habit of attending to curious and unusual word patterns. Miss Allen's little poem records a three-year-old's delight in chanting over and over, "Far, far away, far, far away." With this chant she was responding orally and aurally to a pleasant word-pattern. Would it be any better if she chanted, "Vitamines and calories" or "Gyro-planes and gliders"?

In conclusion, what if any should be the place of the folk tale in the literary experience of the young child today? Granting that much of this material is unfit in theme and treatment for children, there remains a valuable residue that by its very simplicity, its sincerity, its rollicking humor, its action and its clearly defined patterns, lends itself to the appreciation of young children. Of the suitable folk tales we need a wider variety. New collections of old tales from the American Indian, from Russia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Spain are only a few of the larger range now available. There is no reason why a child should have to hear *Chicken-Little* from the kindergarten to the third grade.

With this wider offering there should

be a careful placement of material according to the age and capacity of children. Some of the old favorites, *The Three Pigs*, *The Pancake*, *The Three Billy Goats*, fit obviously into the nursery school level. More of the English and the Norse tales (Jacobs and Thorne-Thomsen) please the kindergarten and first grade child. A variety from the German, Celtic, Norse, Russian, East Indian and American Indian delight the first and second graders, while the older children will appreciate the complex plots, robust humor and subtlety of Parker Fillmore's Czechoslovak tales, *The Shoemaker's Apron*.

In addition to presenting a wider variety of the folk tales, we shall not expect the kindergarten-primary child to reproduce this material either by telling or in dramatic form. Both will occasionally occur, quite spontaneously, but our objective is the children's increased appreciation of good stories, not their mastery of the exact words and form.

Last of all, we must realize that the folk tale should occupy only a small proportion of the child's literary experience even at the nursery, kindergarten, primary levels. He should have, besides the folk tale, a rich experience with poetry, with realistic stories, with well written factual material related to his social studies and to his science. We are indebted to Mrs. Mitchell for her timely emphasis on the *Here and Now* and for the excellent stories she has contributed. Children are indeed keenly interested in stories and factual reading about their everyday experiences. As we develop a larger body of this realistic literature it is possible that children will terminate their interest in fairies, talking beasts and cinder lads earlier and demand more aviators. Only we must not deceive ourselves; both cinder lads and aviators are vicarious experiences for most children. One can be quite as real as the other and both can be stuff out of which dreams are made and life is lovelier.

It should not be a matter of regret that the folk tale may play a smaller part in

the modern child's literary experience if the realistic offering is richer. Only let us be sure that it is before we discard all this wealth of traditional material. Those of us who, like the writer, are both pedagogues and Puritans must remember that our tribe has always leaned heavily towards the real and the earnest. A story that gives sheer enjoyment but neither catalogues useful facts nor offers any explanations of this world of ours we have always tended to view askance. In spite of our pedagogy and our Puritanism we must also remember that the emotions must be fed as well as the mind and it might be well to look to literature now and then for sheer delight. If at five or at forty a story kindles a "hungry curiosity of the mind," moves us to laughter or to tears, makes us like and understand people better, quickens our pulses and lifts our spirit, let us accept that story as literature whether it be a folk tale or a hundred per cent realism.

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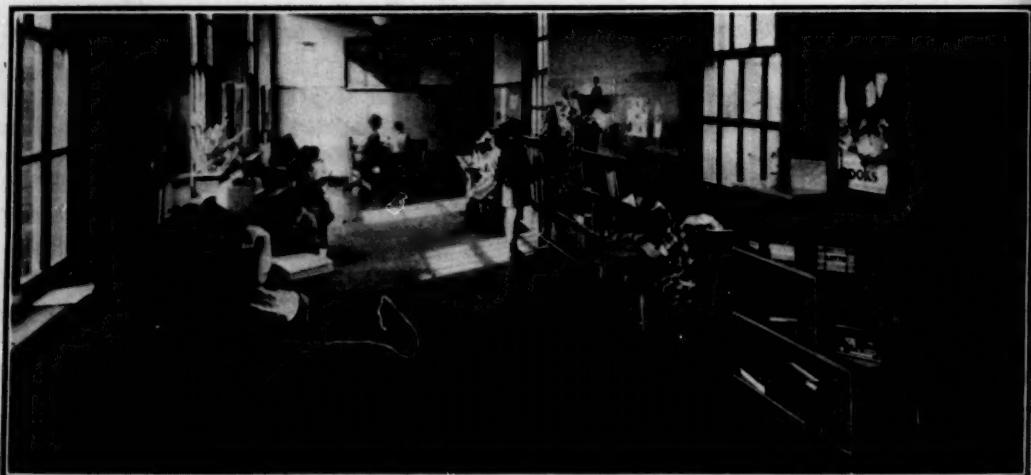
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A sunny corridor converted into a library invites reading.

Imagination in Realism

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I AM asked to write about "realistic literature" for children. I realize that the term alone is bound to evoke a number of characteristic responses if thrown into a miscellaneous group of educators, writers or parents such as are likely to read these pages. There will be a patient group of mothers to whom it suggests the unpleasant duty of reading boring repetitions, tales recommended for their young. Another group will kindle to what seems to them a joyous opportunity to get unsuspecting children to swallow wholesome moral or hygienic pellets artfully concealed as a story. Still another group regard "realism" as an offense against art, an attempt to cheat children of their natural heritage in the realm of imagination. To them "realistic literature" for children is a term of reproach if not a contradiction of terms.

There are many books written for children which explain if they do not justify these responses. I have no desire to review these books any more than I have a desire to read them to myself or to children. A story, like any other work of art, seems to me too precious to exploit for ulterior aims. It *may* instruct, but it *must* interest.

But with all seriousness and earnestness, I want to raise the question whether realistic literature need be a term of reproach, whether "reality" and "imagination" are really antithetical terms, whether stories for small children which are grounded in the world of their own experiences must therefore be limiting and cramping to them, whether imagination and phantasy are synonymous, whether children, before they have had time to explore and organize their experiences in the world they live in, before they comprehend what is "possible," can profit by

the excitement of an impossible world, whether "reality" at two, at four and at six must be preceded by the adjectives "grim" or "stupid."

I know only one adequate way to approach these questions—that is by watching and listening to children. Are they interested or bored by the world around them? Does reality, as they encounter it, cramp them or is it an opportunity for enhanced living? Do they use imagination? If so, does it spring from their experiences or is it phantasy and a denial of reality?

Here are a few random quotations from small children. A three-year-old has moved into a new house and has played in the sunshine on the new roof. He goes downstairs to supper and when he comes back steps out into a changed and darkened world. With a wondering glance he says, "The big shadow is all around." Another three-year-old sees a thin cloud float across the moon. She watches intently, then says to herself, "Like ice, like ice." A group of five-year-olds are on the floor with piles of different-sized pieces of wood variously arranged. That is what they are "in reality." What are they to the five-year-olds? Listen. Here comes one block of wood with two smaller cubes on top of it. The small girl who is pushing calls, "Ding-ding, sh-sh-sh-toot-toot." There is no bell; there is no whistle; only pieces of wood. Or is there an engine in the room? Are there engineers and tracks and tunnels and switches and stations and baggage and passengers? Surely the five-year-olds would say "yes" unhesitatingly. What has imagination to do with this floor play? Is it in action? Is it based on reality or on phantasy?

Another seven-year-old is painting. With firm strokes appears the bright red

outline of a boat such as never sailed on sea. Blue port holes, yellow decks, black curls of smoke against a sky bluer than that of the tropics. As she paints she says to herself, "The waves splash up against me and show a bubbly white streak behind." And I realize that this gay vessel comes from Meta's trip on the Hoboken ferry!

What do we mean by imagination anyway? Does imagination mean the impossible? Does it not rather mean transcending the literal? When a child sees a thin translucent coating across the moon and her mind leaps to the image of another thin translucent coating which she herself has seen on water, is not that leap imagination? Would it have been a better leap for this three-year-old to have called it the fairy queen's veil? Would the five-year-olds have been further on the way to creative imagination if those blocks of wood had not been symbols of past experiences brought to life again by their play? If the children had not been drawing upon images of their own making but had been using phantasies created by some adult, would the whole process have been better play, better art? And would the seven-year-old have been better off, as an artist, if she had drawn the bowl with the three wise men of Gotham instead of a glorified ferry against which she heard white, bubbly water splashing? The true artist is seldom a quoter. The three-year-old who made the accurate, direct observations that "the big shadow was all around," spoke as a poet speaks at first-hand. He was building up images and images, as the word implies, are the stuff that imagination is made out of. Surely, imagination does not exclude the rich, sensuous world, the vital motor world in which children and a few child-like grown-ups live!

When we apply the word imagination to adult literature, what do we mean? Do we identify it with the impossible, the unreal? Run over a list of modern authors who have achieved distinction. Is it only the few who still feel the glamour of

magic, who show any imagination? Could the picture of Isak, "that barge of a man," in the *Growth of the Soil*, have been conceived without rare imagination? And yet the details that make up the picture are so homely, so familiar, so real! If the marvels were taken out of the Odyssey, should we call Homer unimaginative? Homer places you—along with Penelope—in the presence of the concrete, every-day world of a long-ago time—looms, care of the house and food, and of basic relations to husband, father, son, and suitors. His observations are as simple and as direct as the small boy's "big shadow." The dogs wag their tails so Odysseus (and we) know a friend is approaching. The gods are there, too; for they were in that long-ago world. Magic was a part of the "here and now" world of Homer's day for adults as well as for children. It is not in the modern world unless it is brought in for children by adults.

Here we come to the time-honored argument for giving small children folk lore, those tales which have come down to us from long-ago adults who really believed that the world could not be explained without the Supernatural. Above nature, how can young children who are in the early stages of exploring nature appreciate the distinction between the natural and the supernatural? They can not and therein—so some will say—lies the charm of presenting children with a world of unreality which they are still innocent enough to accept. How charming to be able to believe in elves, in trolls, in magic! Let children believe while they can before grim reality brings sophistication. In the early days of man's struggles to understand the world around him, he, too, believed in magic. Therefore, these creations from the childhood period of man are appropriate for children who are still in the early stages of exploring and understanding the world.

This argument overlooks the important fact that although the adults who created the folk lore were children in their scien-

tific thinking, they were mature in their emotional capacities, they were people who had been scarred by experience in love, in anger, in jealousy, in revenge, in the whole gamut of human passions. Often the magic was an attempt to escape from reality.

And do young children need such an escape? I cannot believe it, though I once heard a teacher of distinction say that three-year-olds did need to escape reality. They unquestionably need contact with the new but rather, I should say, through wider and wider explorations into realities. This seems indicated by their incessant finger curiosity, their appetite for investigating the tangible world around them. When this curiosity for exploration is given free scope, I see no evidence that they need an emotional escape into magic.

Does this mean, then, that children in their stories must be limited to the narrow round of their actual personal contacts? Cannot a story legitimately extend their world? Like most questions concerning children, it is a matter of age or rather of maturity. The very young, two or three-year-olds, seem to find the recall of familiar experiences through words a satisfying performance. To extend themselves from the immediate to the past is a satisfying flight for young wings. But it is, nevertheless, an experience in flying. It requires imagination to accomplish it. And it requires the rarest kind of imagination on the part of the writer to bring back to a three-year-old the essence of an experience as it came to him.

Soon children can imagine familiar objects, including themselves, in unwonted situations. They enjoy a flight to new situations. But not *too* new. If there are too many new elements, they are confused and cannot find their way back. City five-year-olds will put toy horses to bed with blankets and sheets and feed them milk and beefsteak even after hearing a story about hay and stalls. The words bring up no images, or rather they bring up the images of things they themselves have ex-

perienced. But after a trip to a stable every detail of a stable story is eagerly absorbed and recreated in their play. The flight from reality was too long. Bit by bit, as the contacts with reality widen, the capacity for sustained flights from the "here" and the "now" develops. But the early flights are along the old familiar paths by which children have come to know the actual world. The new worlds opened through words are still worlds of sights, of sounds, of smells and tactual contacts and muscular strains. They are worlds of wider and more complex reality which are reached through the imagination.

Unless a story affords the reader, child or grown-up, an opportunity for a flight, unless in the telling it adds something to the literal, it would better not have been written. But that something must be on the age level of the readers. To intensify a real experience by bringing it back pared of irrelevancies, leaving the stark essentials, to bring out the essence through a pattern or form which makes it clearer and lovelier, requires imagination, as does all art. But it is not phantasy. It is not a denial of reality. It is not a release from reality. It is a deepened insight into it. Reality is the basis of most of the great art of the world, the phantasy element is only appropriate for those who distinguish the real from the unreal readily enough to get a delight from the piquancy of the unfamiliar or for those who have become bored by long and irksome contact with reality only, in other words, for those who have attained a certain degree of maturity. Seldom is this before seven years. As a predominant diet, it is doubtful at any age though fine as a relish.

Imagination in children's literature? Assuredly; otherwise it is not literature. But for the young, imagination which makes the young readers more alive to the sensuous and motor world in which they live, imagination which quickens their images, which makes reality realer.

Illustrated Books for the Four-to-Eight-Year-Old

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YOUNG children early learn to recognize the pictured forms of familiar things. Picture symbols offer few difficulties and many joys for them. They take to them as naturally as does the well known duck to water, only like the young duck they usually need a bit of supervision from their more experienced elders. Soon, too, they try out picture symbols of their own using whatever materials happen to be at hand. There is much for adults to learn of aptitudes and tastes and interests from these crude picturings of the child. He sees his world clearly and keenly although not in the conventionally adult way. And in this seeing lies the beginning of a natural growth of expression, an outlet, an interpretation of the surroundings which later suddenly seem to become so complex. He gets the idea of picturing, he becomes interested in other people's pictures, he is ready for the world of books—ready through pictures long before he is ready for them through the more abstract symbols of words.

Primitive man used and enjoyed pictures in much the same way, a way quite different from the "pretty" picture attitude which the present day adult is just beginning to overcome. He pictured his every-day life, his activities, his interests, his experiences. He showed his picturings to his neighbors. He kept his pictures for later followers to read. Those marvelous drawings of prehistoric beasts done on the walls of the caves at Altamira, Spain, by some race of men long since lost or absorbed; the picture writings of the American Indians; the carvings of the Eskimo; the wall paintings of ancient Egypt; and the religious picturings of Mediaeval Europe—all have both story and art values

far beyond anything which we can easily produce with our present attitude towards the picture as a pretty decoration to life.

Of late though, adults have come to take more seriously the use of visual imagery as an educative means and pictures have quite naturally come back into use, though often to a use far beneath their real values. Educators have, until recently, persistently ignored them and have glorified the more abstract word form thus almost entirely eliminating pictures from their place in education. Oriental peoples have a very ancient saying that "a picture is as strong as ten thousand words," but Western peoples have long labored under the delusion that pictures, especially if colored, were among those things in the control of Beelzebub himself. Those who made pictures were classed as a queer folk, even if quite respectable, certainly of no great importance or worth. Fortunately much of this long prevailing idea is already outgrown.

We have perfected fine new devices for picture making and pictorial reproduction. Tabloid and other newspaper promoters, anxious to reach a public which even if it has learned to read finds pictures more graphic, have developed a strong technique of picture expression—morbidity as their subject matter often may seem to an enlightened public. Visual education has become of importance in our schools. Advertising, photography, moving pictures, and other forms of picture appeal, have taught us again to "read" from pictures—an art which was almost lost to us in the late nineteenth century when pictures were so rare that great aunts made scrap books for them. A few books for adults have lately been printed with no words in them, only pic-

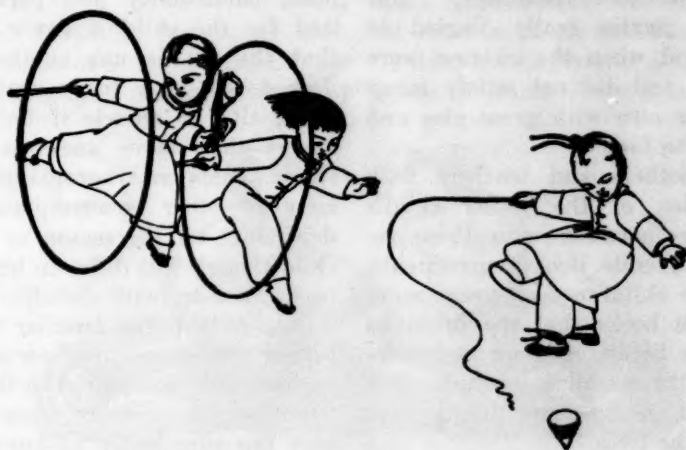
tures in sequence to build up the story. Fine artists have come down from the sheltered heights to which they had retreated, and are contributing on all sides to every-day life. Creative expression is being urged for everyone. We are beginning to be serious about pictures and to see them as another valuable means of interpreting the happenings about us.

And all of this seriousness about picture symbols and visual imagery has fitted in nicely with our interests in ourselves and our own psychology and the attention which is now being given to education, especially for the pre-school and primary child. Young children who have not yet learned word symbols or whose use of them is still limited and faltering find pictures a natural and at the same time exciting way of finding out about the world around them. Ideas are stimulated and focused, associations called forth, memory comes into use, imagination runs freely, wider horizons are opened up.

Books of all sorts, especially books for boys and girls, have revived the cherished glories of ancient hand-made types in new and much less expensive forms. Children's books are now so wonderful to the eye and touch that it seems probable that their effect will be of lasting value in sensitizing the fortunate children who possess them

to the possibilities of beauty in replacing the thoughtless ugliness of their surrounding. Is it foolhardy to hope that such charm will linger so long in memory? Surely not if wise adults focus the young attention on them by early initiation into the responsibilities of possession. It seems that there could be no pleasanter way to do this than through good books in fine sturdy editions suited in subject and in make-up to the age and interests of the growing and changing child. Good books, which through their obvious charm, would suggest that he handle them carefully, have a book shelf of his own to arrange and shift about and organize, and perhaps a little informal reading corner with a tiny easy chair, a round table, book-ends, jackets, markers and the other little accessories that would make him and his small friends feel that they were enjoying the same things that their grown-up companions enjoy.

These recent changes in books are very evident to those of us who, as small anxious children, were fascinated by what might lie between the covers of a closed book. And we feel a thrill of pleasure when we realize that today's children will not look behind covers to find frightening moral tales, in very small print with few pictures, of dreary old little people who



From Spin Top Spin. (The Macmillan Company)

were always doing small wrongs and ending under straight little white tombstones, or fairy tales of gruesome giants and horrible dwarfs and anaemic suffering princesses which reflect age-old race fears too violent for excitable childish imagina-

panding and at the present time offers a wide range for selection. In general, though, young children seem to find attractive those stories which deal with the things around about them, for they are becoming acquainted with life as it is



From *A Head for Happy*. (The Macmillan Company).

tions. The Chatter Box was of never failing joy with its odds and ends of stories and small black and white pictures, and there were occasional animal tales about real animals well pictured though invariably smothered in a sentimental sort of old-dog-Tray-devotion-to-its-master. But Mother Goose jingles really jingled to childish ears and when the pictures were small and dull and did not satisfy many of us made our own with great glee and little attention to fact.

Nowadays mothers and teachers with real appreciation of the young child's likes and in cooperation with those responsible for Juvenile Book Departments, are bringing to children such great numbers of suitable books that the problems of selection are becoming more and more dependent on the peculiar interests of a particular child, his age, and the environment in which he lives.

Both the word and picture subject matter of children's books is constantly ex-

lived in their own environment and their chief desire is to find out more about it. Consequently they are interested in books which tell in picture and word about children at play; the activities of the adults who are working around them; animals, particularly pets partially humanized for the child is never quite certain that the cat is not another person all decked out in a furry coat with claws; things that move such as automobiles, trains, boats and aeroplanes; and a variety of other commonplace happenings dependent on the season or place. Each child though will differ in his bias towards books dealing with definite kinds of material. Who is not familiar with the everlasting concentration of certain small boys on boats and aeroplanes to the end that at five they can picture them so perfectly that the supposedly all-knowing adult is left so far behind that he can only gasp and admire. It would be foolish to select

for such a small boy a pretty book of fairy tales for he would surely be wise enough to ignore it.

Some children like particularly those picture and word books which deal in a simple and not-too-far-removed-from-experience way with the world of fancy. Humanized stories of animals in which they experience things familiar to the



From *Angus and the Ducks*.
(Doubleday Doran Company).

child. Children, too, like books which deal humorously with the material which they contain; a fact which adults often overlook as their humor is likely to be different from the child's and book content is too often considered as very serious. Nevertheless, children like particularly to laugh and their senses of humor are liable to be as slap-stick or as subtle as any adult's.

The actual drawings for young children's books offer even more varied types than the wording and are educatively at

least as important. Several studies have been made of children's preferences in pictures, but as yet the field is scarcely scratched. In general, children seem to like simple direct picturings; well drawn in the sense that each object is clearly symbolized and expressive of characteristics even if it is not a very photographic likeness; strong contours or mass shapes; bold round forms which are three dimensional rather than flat or gracefully decorative in effect; moving, active rhythms both of lines and colors; and striking and forceful dark and light patterns with brilliant color applied in not too literal and realistic a way. They like easily discerned centers of interest and points of emphasis and enough detail to suggest the whole picture and to free the imagination to build up its own ramifications of the pictured idea. Children's taste when unaffected by adult standards, is usually much better than it has been thought to be. Children have an innate love of forms and rhythms and compositional wholes that it takes many years of intensive training to replace once it is lost in the shuffle that precedes adolescence. Their taste is spontaneous and concerns itself as readily with art phases (rhythms of line, dark-light and color) as it does with realistic considerations. The child eye loves to wander along whirling lines, to slide from dark to dark and to be excited by a blaze of color as much as the child hand loves to drag a brush across a paper, to drop on spots of paint, or to splash in color. It



From *Snippy and Snappy*. (Coward-McCann).

seems quite clear that all one needs to do is to foster this natural delight and one would develop a marvelous fine art taste among adults but to do that is infinitely more complicated than to say it else it would have happened long ago.

There are now so many fascinating techniques of illustration and such varied personalities among the illustrators in vogue, that it is only possible for me to suggest a few of those which, for one reason and another, interest me especially and whose popularity among those who select children's books is widespread.

The following brief list, then, represents my own special favorites whose work seems to me to have definite art significance as well as story telling value. Because of this, I would recommend them highly as acquaintances for those children whose own interests are related to the subjects treated in the books.

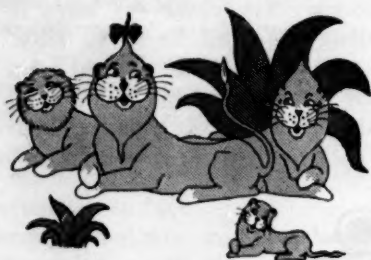
The quaint-in-subject, "crayony"-in-technique, round and rough and vivid drawings which *Helen Sewell* (well liked already for her gay alphabet picture book) has made for an amusing new tale called "A Head for Happy," seems to me most suited to the story itself which tells how some children made a doll and had to go

throughout the book make it into quite an irresistible whole.

In contrast are the exquisitely tinted drawings of round-faced, wide eyed,



From *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*.
(The Macmillan Company).



From *Trum Peter's Tea Party*.
(Coward-McCann)

all around the world before they found a head quite right for it. The firm, direct, rhythmic lines of these drawings suggest the active play of a group of sturdy youngsters and the brilliant pinks, yellows and greens which appear at odd intervals

plump and well-starched children playing gay games among stray flowers and birds and butterflies which *Elsa Eisgruber* has made for "Spin, Top, Spin." The lines of them are delicately strong and rhythmical and the book seems meant for nice little girls with clean scrubbed hands and frocks who are resting up from a hard morning of play. The cover is suitably done in glossy white with an old blue binding and the pale hued oblong pages of merry scampering children offer quiet delights for the weary eye.

Humorous and as intriguing as possible are *Wanda Gag's* inimitable cats from her popular "Millions of Cats," selected by the Graphic Arts Society as one of the twenty best books of 1928. Equally absorbing are her more recent curiosity-filled and gossipy field mice named "Snippy and Snappy" and the queer animal

from "The Funny Thing." The sturdy woodblock technique, the bold black and white page patterns, the heavy rounded forms as well as the carefully and humorously characterized animal types make her work something quite precious and distinctive to be appreciated by any age from four to eighty.

A bit more flat and decorative in style but very amusing as humanized animals



From *Little Leo*.
(Doubleday Doran Company).

are *Philip Nesbitt's* drawings for "Trum Peter's Tea Party," a tale in which a cute little white elephant who liked better than anything else to blow on his trumpet blew and blew so hard, inviting all of his jungle pals to his party that even the insides of his ears turned pink! The next-to-human expressions of delight and pomposity on the animals are really priceless and again make the book of interest to adults whose imaginations are still going strong. There is also a lovely smooth curving line running through the composition of the draw-

ings which greatly adds to their appeal for me.

The drawings by *Zhenya and Jan Gay* for their story of "The Shire Colt" show a sympathy with pets which takes the place of the gay humor of the slant which *Wanda Gag* and *Philip Nesbitt* bring to their animal illustrations. The awkward young colt and his adoring mother are drawn with a feeling which lifts them out of the commonplace. Too, the chief objects in each sketch are drawn so very large in proportion to the space and are so surrounded with bits of detail that suggest the whole setting of the farm that the emphasis easily goes where it belongs and the imagination is set smoothly in motion. The rough, direct, lithographic technique, expressing bulk and form as children often do with wax crayon, helps to reinforce the strength of the whole effect.

Similar to this, in their expressive realness, are *Marjorie Flack's* drawings of *Angus*, the inquisitive and much teased *Scottie* who romps through "Angus and the Ducks" and "Angus and the Cats." There is something so appealing in her way of drawing animals that anyone who has really looked at them has forever after a deeper feeling for the little fellows which she portrays.

Berta and Elmer Hader's drawings of animals also have a charm of their own—a charm coming from a thorough understanding on the part of the draftsmen of the animals to be drawn. For example, look at little *Leo*, the nicely brought up



From *Jack Horner's Pie*. (Harper and Brothers).

lion cub who yearned to see his wild jungle world and did. That naughty, about-to-escape expression in the eye of Leo means a giggle for you whatever your age. Besides Leo, the Haders have recently done Bimba, "The Baby Bear," Jimmy, "The Little Elephant," "Joeko," a Monkey Tale, and "The Farmer in the Dell."

More conventional animal forms, well designed in large page-filling shapes, an animal to each letter, are to be found in *C. B. Falls'* woodcuts for his "A. B. C. Book," which is as distinguished today as when first it came from the press and a recognized influence in its strong decorative style.

William Nicholson's gay illustrations for the tale of "Clever Bill," a very gallant and very stiff toy soldier, and for "The Velveteen Rabbit" delight because they are so humorous and imaginative and pleasant to look at.

The silhouette illustration is always vivid and interesting. It leaves so much to the imagination and yet makes what it does tell so clear. It fits so well with type and looks so much a part of the black and white layout of pages. *Elsa Beskow's* silhouettes, of which there are so many and never too many, seem most alive and satisfying. I like particularly those for her newer books, "Peter's Voyage" with His Teddy Bear and "The Adventures of Peter and Lotta," with the third kitten, but that is only because I have seen it last. When I first saw them I liked "Buddy's Adventures in the Blue Berry Patch" and all of the "Aunt" tales, and "Ole's Ski Trip," and "The Tale of the Wee Little Old Woman," and "Pelle's New Suit," just as well. No one makes any silhouettes which are more pictorial, more moving and full of action, more bulky and solid, or more exciting in edge detail than does Mrs. Beskow.

Boris Artzybasheff makes beautiful silhouettes that in decorative quality are unexcelled, but they seem a little more suit-

ed to older children than the gay little outlines which Elsa Beskow contrives. His new work "The Fairy Shoemaker" is marvelously spirited.

Martha Bruere has some white against black illustrations in "Sparky for Short" which attract my attention because they are in reverse from the usual silhouette.

In line, *Lois Lenski's* quaint little pictures which fit so well with her odd little versifications and give such an air of whimsicality and so individual a look to whatever she does, seem particularly satisfactory. In the "Alphabet People," "Jack Horner's Pie," "Sing a Song of Sixpence," and "Benny and His Penny," her drawings seem made up of the naive and simple symbols which children use, yet the longer you look the more you realize the cunning and the artistry which lies behind so light an effect.

Lynd Ward's free brush drawings in inky blackish gray lines for "The Cat Who Went to Heaven," Elizabeth Coatsworth's Newberry Prize Book for 1930, indicate that he has new techniques and fine feeling for what he is picturing.

This summary could go on endlessly, but I have run out of both space and energy and have only time to add a list of my special favorites whom I have thus far neglected. Emma Brock, the Peter-shams, Elizabeth McKinstry, Dorothy Lathrop, Rachel Field, Louis Moe, Boutet de Monvel, Willy Plank, Mary Leaman, Peggy Bacon all should have a great deal of attention and may prove to be even greater favorites with you than the ones which I have already discussed.



From Millions of Cats
(Coward-McCann).

An Experiment with Language Expression in the Nursery School

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COME lean back against the green
gray trunks of the olive trees in the
nursery school yard and watch and
listen to the children who jump and ride,
and hammer and paint, and play and
work, and talk and chant joyously the
morning long.

Towner, just four, runs up, face alight.
He says:

"Come—

I want to tell you a story,
I want to tell you a story.

Bobby washed the chairs.
Bobby washed the table.
He washed his hands after.
He wiped his hands after.
That was all."

Three year old Sonny comes over
quietly, his wide face dreamy. He barely
whispers that he has a story to tell, and
then a little louder gives his story, slowly,
pensively.

"Daddy's got a big auto
So he can go fast—
Way, way down,
Way, way back

Once its big tire
Made a big noise.
It was all broken.
It had a blow out.
Bing! a tire
Made a big noise."

These children seem to feel a power to
handle language—a power to communicate
their thought. They seem to feel a
warmth and joy and at-homeness in the
use of words.

Not that most children do not possess
naturally an ability for rhythmic expres-
sion. If ever we doubt it, all we have to
do is to listen when they are not conscious
of our listening. Hear what four year old

Towner is intoning as he marches up and
down the steps.

"He goes up the steps,
And walks and jumps,
And walks and jumps,
And he walks and jumps,
Funny man!"

And then all over again and still again
. . . Or listen to Sheldon, only two and a
half, as he shoves a dirty little match box
around and around in the sand.

"Here goes the train,
Here goes the train,
Around in a circus,
Around in a circus,
Here goes the train."

We could beat time if we would.

Intrinsically within their speech lies a
rhythmic, picture-bearing quality that of
itself forms now and again into patterns
as it flows along. Consequently they in-
nately possess a power to tell stories. Most
of them, however, do not know that they
possess it, and so are not able to call on it
to function at will. Nor do we adults
help them. Instead we often put barriers
in their way. Perhaps we even rob them
of their capacity, by letting them feel, for
one thing, through the stories we tell,
that the stories we value are not of their
sort.

We set before them models too compli-
cated and far off. And soon a "story"
comes to mean something apart from
themselves instead of integrally of them-
selves. They do not know enough of the
materials of which such stories are woven,
and so instead of being able to weave
others freely, they must needs imitate in
order to achieve any story at all.

Why can we not help them instead to
feel through the stories we tell them that

the content of their lives is worthy of the name story? And why, oh, why, can we not let them know, each and every one of them, that so often their own natural, normal, rhythmic expression concerning this or that is in reality a story as well?

When three year old Betty comes up to you with an old blue sash wound around her waist and joyously calls attention to herself with

"I'm all dressed up,
I have a sash,
It hangs down long
Behind me.
And look at me!
When I jump up,
The sash jumps up
Behind me."

do you ever appreciatively answer, "Yes, and I think what you've told me about your sash is a lovely story." Or do you instead think it worthwhile to take notice only of stories about brownies and fairies and silver moonlight and roses? And have you, possibly, been encouraging an artificiality of imitation, rather than cherishing the spontaneity which belongs?

At Normandie Nursery School there had been few stories. Yet, when the children heard that the new teacher knew many stories, several out of their total of thirty, came up to her, and in all friendliness tried to make her feel at home by offering her of their best wares.

"I'll tell you a story," volunteered Norine, "about 'The Three Bears.'"

"And I'll tell it, too," seconded Richard.

"And a beanstalk," added Ruth.

These were some of the stories they had heard at home, as questionnaires sent to their mothers revealed.

These they were able to give back in half-memorized versions, but when the new teacher asked if they would also tell stories of their own, many pairs of eyes looked at her blankly—oh, ever so blankly. Richard shook his head, Martha grinned

as if at a huge joke, while Jean whispered, "I don't know."

Days followed in which they listened at times to stories about little boys and girls like themselves, about automobiles like the automobiles all around them on the streets, about their own favorite activities of washing cups and setting tables, about this and that near and homely subject.

In addition another thing was done. The new teacher listened to those children. She listened to them at work. She listened to them at play. She covered pads and pads of yellow paper with their verbalization, and then read and reread this material and was able to select many sections that contained rhythm and action and were in reality little stories.

For instance, she listened when Richard, not quite four, sat digging in the sand with Billy. As he dug he talked. As he talked she recorded. The verbalization read:

"I will get your birthday cake, won't I!
You aren't going to take my birthday
cake, are you, Billy?
Now shall we do it with our hands,
Billy.
Now let's dig some more.
Dig down, dig down, dig down,
Let's dig another hole.
You dig one there.
I'll dig one here.
Let's do it with our hands . . ."

She had been listening barely two minutes, and yet, here already was a "story":

Dig down, dig down, dig down,
Let's dig another hole.
You dig one there.
I'll dig one here.
Let's do it with our hands.

The more she recorded verbalization the more she grew in ability quickly to recognize cadenced bits with picture-bearing quality as they came into children's speech.

Here was one, for instance, coming at three and a half year old Ruth stood

looking up at the bowl of flowers on the window sill, and talking to herself,

Here are flowers—
Here,
Here!
Do you know
What they're called?
'Sturtiums,
Nasturtiums,
That's what
They're called."

There was another where a two and a half year older was chanting as he worked over moist gray clay,

"Oh, look!
Look what I made.
I made a turtle.
I put this clay on the top,
And this on the low,
Look at the turtle."

And here yet another, as a baby, not quite two, walked toward the piano with an anticipatory,

"Dance, dance, dance,
Piano.
Dance, dance, dance
Piano."

And again there, as eighteen months old Dolores, settled herself on her cot for nap, with an accented

"Lie down,
Lie down,
Knée, knee; knee, knée;
Lég, leg; lég, leg;
Cover up!"

From here, there and everywhere, stories were all unconsciously being given out.

A number of these she typed and filed into a loose-leaf, cretonne covered book. In the margins she drew crude little crayola sketches as illustrations. And then she commenced reading these to the children, showing them the pictures at the same time. There they sat listening—wondering, smiling, seriously intent—utterly interested.

"Read about a steam-roller again," demanded impish-eyed, two year old Andrew.

"And again," from Mary Lou.

"And again . . ."

Twenty-three times they would have it!

"Read about digging the street" . . .
"and about drinking water" . . . "and about the slide" . . . "and about sun-suits."

Gradually the children were shown that they themselves had made up the stories in "our book." The one just read "was Ruth's story," or "This is one that Richard made when he was painting this morning," or, "Listen, Ruth, here is a story you made while you were riding on the kiddy kar . . ."

Or, they were told at the time of saying, rather the time of reading, just after their speech had been written down. "That was another good story. I wrote it down on this pad. And later on I'll put it into our book."

Things came to pass.

First, stories that the new teacher told were retold—just as the *Three Bears* had been retold. But here was story material that was more on their own level. It was completely understandable to them. They could manipulate it to their own ends, so that somehow they began to take all sorts of liberties with it. They shifted, changed. They introduced new elements cautiously, more boldly, until, at last there evolved new stories—new stories altogether—but woven from the same source, the children's own familiar world.

Also there came consciously, the same sort of little rhythmic stories, as those that had heretofore been taken down without conscious production for "our book."

The new rat babies are subjects of much comment. Richard, four and a half, wants to tell about them. He must stand right in front of the cage. He leads the new teacher there by the hand and announces that he is going to make a story about them, and begins

"Mammy rat
Is getting all the paper
To make her babies warm.
I see her stomach
Going back and forth.

She tears the paper up
In little pieces
And puts them in the bed
To keep the babies warm."

Martha, also four, notices him. She comes running. She, too, must make a story. She tells:

"There are three new baby rats.
Almost all of them are black,
And some of them are white.
They're all in their bed.
Before they were just born
They were all in their mother.
They went out
Through the mother's bottom.
Then—
They got in their bed.
They were so little,
And their eyes were closed."

This is more than just a story! This is revelation of fine attitudes shaping. How splendid that birth processes can be described physiologically, casually in the same breath and in the same tone as closed eyes!

And other attitudes. Four year old Nancy's, for instance, toward death, is this:

"Once upon a time
An old moo cow
Gave milk.
But soon—
She got so old
She died.
And then—
A new moo cow
Gave milk
Until
She died.
And then—
Another
And another."

The serenity and philosophy in it!

Three year old Jean is "shy" and yet she, too, brings contribution. Hers comes almost in a whisper, but one knows what she is about because before she starts she points to one by-this-time well-known yellow pad and waits for the pencil to go down to the paper. She tells a sad story about her kitten.

"I had a kitty cat
And it ran away.
And it never came
Back again.
We gave it lots of milk,
But we didn't give it enough.
So—
It ran
Away.
And now we've got a bunny—
A real bunny rabbit—
And we give him more milk
So he won't
Run
Away."

Barbara, also three, comes up on soft feet. She nods her head confidently—oh ever so confidently—just keeps on nodding for minutes, and then shares her story:

"I have dry pants
Every day.
I have dry beds
Every day.
I go to the toilet
Every day.
And do not wet
My pants,"

and then turns with a sigh of relief at having unburdened herself.

Jimmy, of similar age, however, is more tempestuous. He dashes up and, with a merry twinkle, gives this:

"I blew my nose.
I blew it one way
I blew it another way,
I blew it off.
My nose!"

These children have become free to let

themselves out in story. They feel that what they know intimately will make stories. A "story" is no longer an achievement beyond them. No need to doubt that they are able to pattern stories, nor to repress them. No need any longer to offer in their name, poor little half-memorized reproductions of what they have heard.

Because their own stories had held such significance to the children at Normandie, a question followed. Would other children be alive and receptive to these same stories; and could these stories, through interest in them, help introduce the idea of story-making into a different group?

And so the Normandie stories were taken to Broadoaks Nursery School and were read there accompanied by a simultaneous showing of the crude little sketches in the margins.

"Read it again" . . . "Now more . . ." "And another one" . . . had evidenced enthusiasm, as had also quiet focused attention, and smiles.

At first there was much clamoring to see pictures as well as to hear. And then gradually the significance of the words deepened to such an extent that stories alone, presented without sight of illustrations, would call forth equally interested responses.

And in other groups the same!

While, in addition, here again, unconsciously-made stories of their own seemed to help the children to become more freely expressive.

And, yet again, in other groups, the same!

Can we not then echo as our credo, the words of Lucy Sprague Mitchell, when she says, "I do believe that children play with words naturally and spontaneously, just as they play with any material that comes to their creative hands"? (*) And can we not resolve, still in her words, to try to the best of our understanding to "Help children retain their native gift

of play with language and thought?" (*)

But to many of us encouraging this gift consists of our asking children to tell stories to each other at a set story time. We fail to see the difficulties with small children here in the way of natural spontaneous expression. Where enunciation is poor or voice pitch low, or where there is shyness or self-consciousness, it is difficult for other children to understand. They break in and interrupt. The teacher's attention disperses and passes from an encouraging focus on the child who should be having it to a scattering over the group.

"Sh! Betty—quiet now. Bobby's telling his story. You may tell yours in a minute . . . A little louder Bobby so all the children can hear" . . . Raised eyebrows at Colleen, who is about to pull Rhoda's hair, and a hand stretched out to calm Henry's giggling. Then attention can come back momentarily to Bobby. One half-hears the breathy little voice,

. . . . "and the little baby
Went down the river
Went down the sewer
And went to swim
In a little boat . . ."

One is vaguely reminded of something . . . Oh, yes, *Baby's Boat's a Silver Moon!* That's it, only it's hard to account for the sewer. The voice goes on and on, barely audible. The other children are so restless. Someone else must have a turn. Bobby must be stopped . . . "Thank you, Bobby, that was very nice" . . . to the accompaniment of "Now me, me, me . . ." Why, one wonders, has Bobby's voice been so breathy and withheld, not at all like the resonantly happy voice of half an hour before when he was accompanying his kiddy-car-riding with rhythmic phrases.

Maybe one goes on this way from day to day. Maybe one has "better success" with a group that "quiets down and becomes more orderly." Maybe one decides that these children are still too young to hear each other's stories and the effort is discontinued.

(*) Lucy Sprague Mitchell: *Here and Now Story Book*. Dutton, 1921, Introduction.

But they are not too young. They keenly appreciate each other's stories. It is each other's telling that is not so much enjoyed. The single child lacks the ability and technique to hold the group in listening unity. He has not the capacity to take contributions from others and mould them into his story as it advances. The others must sit absolutely still. And he must talk in loud enough voice for them to hear, slowly enough for them to understand, consecutively enough for them to keep interested. Performance is apt to be the thing of the moment, not creativeness.

What need, however, to confine stories to a set period or to prescribed modes of delivery when stories are such a real part of living? Can we not preferably gather them as they are given out while children are at work, at play, or running or swinging or picking poppies . . . and then give them back to the children in our more adequate rendition?

And can we not throughout let children gain increasing awareness of their capacity to make stories so that there may flourish within them a feeling of ability and a consequent power of freer expressiveness?

Cornelia hammers, and in accompaniment her voice chants,

"I'm hammering like this—
Pounding
Pounding
All the time.
Bang!
Bangggg!"

Sheldon, close by, intones with a different rhythm of his own,

"Look at the nail
Look at the nail
Go down in the wood,
Way down in the wood
To the bo-o-tom."

Why not increase awareness with "Cornelia that was a good story you made for our book while you were hammering," . . . and "Sheldon, you made a story

when Cornelia was hammering, I'll read it to you . . ." Why not? Especially when we may in this very way possibly be letting Cornelia realize for the first time that she is *able* to make stories.

But to do any of this we must open our minds and our ears so that we are able to *hear*. We must not keep waiting, waiting, for the ethereal, the unusual, the far-distant and high-and-beautiful. Rather we must be willing to let in the lowly and well-known and to appreciate the freshness and vitality it possesses for small children.

Yet who can fail in appreciation after seeing, for instance, the joy of achieved exploration that accompanies three year old Petie's story of the brown hen?

"When the hen
Laid the egg
She said,
'Thank you!'
Yes—
She *can* say,
'Kuk kuk kuk
Kank you!
Kank you, here's the egg!"

And who could remain skeptical after seeing John with arms outstretched, high on the fence, head flung back, drinking in the wind, with

"The wind is blowing
The wind is blowing
Puffff — Puffff.
I want it to blow
Me — offffff."

The importance of such little things! . . . Pickles and purses? . . . Listen to Carolyn, just three:

"One day my mother
Had pickles
And purses,
And a black bag
And money.
And she gave some to me."

And shoes? . . . Hear Towner:
"Joanne has so *little* shoes,

She has *tiny* shoes.
 But *I*
 Have big shoes
 'Cause I'm a big, big, *big*
 Four year old boy."

And even the blowing of breath, as evidenced by two year old Carolyn's,

"I can blow bubbles
 Off of milk
 And off of orange juice—
 Whu-whu!!
 And I can blow
 Hair, too."

If only we will fully, fundamentally, deeply feel how worth while it is, we will discover that we can all find time to welcome such stories in the midst of busy days. Mothers at home can have yellow pads and loose-leaf notebooks on hand as well as can teachers in nursery schools, and can slip in moments between shopping and housekeeping to listen and to acknowledge story contributions.

Often such moments make us better able to enter understandingly into the world of our small children. Often such moments bring us something which we might otherwise have missed. How unfortunate, had one lost opportunity of saving Janet* a duplication of anxiety through glimpsing past tension when she told of her afternoon nap at the house of her mother's friend:

"I didn't know when it was three o'clock.
 I said to myself,
 'That clock must be very late' . . .
 Maybe I'll stay in bed all day.
 It might be one . . .
 It might be four.
 I wondered if I should *call*
 Like I do home.

I wondered and wondered and wondered,
 And at last I said to myself,
 'I'd better keep the covers
 Over my head.'
 I waited and I waited
 And at last

She
 Came right in."

How regrettable, too, had one been closed toward sharing the chuckling account of her toy chickens which Nancy, four and a half, gave one night from the bedroom floor as she was taking off her shoes:

"I had a box
 And found
 Four chickens in it,
 I stood them straight up
 On the ground
 And gave them each
 A name.

Acorn,
 Artichoke,
 Alfred
 And—
 Fir-o-ce-ous—
 Those were
 Their names."

And what a loss not to have been able to participate in her beautiful discovery that:

"The rain
 Coming through the screen
 Makes little dots
 Of floor
 Wet."

Imagine the accuracy and clarity in "little dots of floor!"

Imagine the possibilities in the growth of such expressiveness—the gladness, the confidence, the feeling of adequacy that it may bring.

And vision, in consequence, the dawning within all children of such a vivid sense of power to create that ever and again they, too, will have coming into their faces the same joyous imparting look that Hilda (*) must have worn when she said:

"Mother, a poem,
 Somehow I hear it rustling."

(*) Hilda Conkling: Poems: *Singing Youth*, edited by Mabel Mountsier; Harper, 1937, p. 36.

Many of the children's contributions in this article from "*Blimps and Such*" are to be published by Harper and Brothers in 1932.

Literature Is in the Air

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THE present day progressive school provides a time for literature on its daily program. It provides a place for literature in its school environment. It provides opportunities for sharing the responses which literature develops. The new school respects the small child's opinions, his appreciations, his well-meant efforts. It encourages teachers in their efforts to have "literature in the air" for the joy and power it gives to children, for the activities it arouses, for the sympathies it helps to cultivate and for the happiness it affords.

The change in room environment alone shows plainly the new point of view concerning the place of literature in the school program. Picture the school room of a decade ago! The firm rows of desks invited formal procedures. In such a room literature may be listened to; stories can be reproduced; poems can be memorized.

In order that there may be space and opportunity for the variety of adventures literature offers and for the sharing of experiences and creative work, the room environment has changed from the formal type to an informal type.

Parents sometimes offer to help beautify school rooms. In one school a mother designed a delightful fairy face pattern which was painted on the corners of small tables. The pattern reappeared on the white cheese cloth curtains. A corner space with a rug and some books provided a setting in which literature may thrive and become purposeful in the atmosphere thus created.

Literature should offer enjoyable experiences for the sake of cultivating and deepening the emotions. Thus ideals are

discovered which may become standards for behavior. Impulses for creative work are stimulated. Learning becomes a thorough-going process because interest is at its highest. Stories, poems and rhymes are dramatized. Stories, poems and rhymes are created. Reading festivals, story festivals and poem festivals are culminations for the emotional and intellectual responses which experience with literature stimulates.

Literature not only gives knowledge but it encourages the desire to seek knowledge. Thus children of the first grade level are actively engaged in constructing a doll's house similar to the one found in *The Dolly Kruse Book*, by Rose Fyleman. Again they make a real playhouse as did Jack, Jane and Baby in *My Other Reading Book*.

After the children in the first grade visited a real farm and had stories about farm life read to them, they made a Story Festival out of the experience. *Bobby of Cloverfield Farm* was among the stories. The festival took the form of a program for the Junior Assembly. The participants were seated on the platform in a semi-circle. Mary, aged six, announced the numbers:

"The Assembly will sing, 'Did You Ever See a Farmer'."

"Miranda will tell about trip to the farm."

"Mitchell will tell about the cows we saw."

"Some children have poems to tell you:

'Going to the Pasture'

'I had a Little Turtle'

'I had a Little Pony'

'A Farmer Went a Riding'."

"Some children have stories about Mr.

Hill's horse, Prince:

'How Mr. Hill got Prince'
'Prince is homesick'
'Prince Runs Away'
'Prince is Found'."

Some children will give a play, "Prince is Stolen."

Out of the building of a grocery store and the reading of *Bobby and Betty in the City* the following Poem and Rhyme Festival developed:

"We all like the poem, 'A Fairy Went A-Marketing.' John will tell it to you."

"Five children will tell you some rhymes about things in our grocery store. The things are Bananas, Baskets, Oranges, Apples and Candy. Three children will tell some other rhymes."

"We have some riddles about water-melons, cabbages and potatoes. Robert will ask you to guess them."

"Three children will tell the rhymes about the Milkman, the Iceman, and My Little Man."

"Another poem we all know is 'When I was Down Beside the Sea.'" Rosa

Ann will tell it."

In the second grade the teacher read among other stories, *Chi-Wee* and *Chi-Wee and Loki*, by Grace Moon. One child said, "I like it (*Chi-Wee*) because it has a long (meaning continuous) story about the same girl." The children visited the Field Museum to see the Southwest Indian exhibits, which helped them to become "saturated with experiences" and stimulated creative work.

Presentation should be kept simple. The teacher reads and rereads poems and stories. She enjoys them as much as the children do. Her day may have lost some of its gladness if no story or poem has been a part of the day's program. "Finding Fairies," by Marjorie Barrows; "The Woodpecker," by Elizabeth Madox Roberts; "The Sugar Plum Tree," by Eugene Field, and "Some One," by Walter de la Mare are a few among the many good poems that bear frequent repetitions. And to hear them again and again is the child's divine right. He listens willingly. He chooses poems to be read. He volunteers to "tell" the poems he knows. One boy



Second Grade, Winnetka, Illinois

A trip to see the Southwest Indian exhibits stimulated this creative work.

asks: "I want this poem that says about the 'Misty Cat' in this book." ("The Mysterious Cat," by Vachel Lindsay, in *Silver Pennies*.)

The children learn through spontaneous imitation. They learn small significant portions first, while participating in the saying of parts and the listening to the whole poem. The children repeat line for line in order to confirm the learning. When the children have a repertoire of poems or rhymes there is the natural expectation that they want to share what has been learned. Lois, in the beginners' group, brought a box of blocks in the shape of books with Mother Goose rhymes printed on them. Prior to this the children had been enjoying the Mother Goose rhymes for some time. Now they decided to give a "Rhyme Festival" for their mothers. Each child copied a simple invitation to be given to mother. The children chose Lois as the chairman for the occasion. She selected eleven children. Each one was to "read" a rhyme from each of the eleven book-blocks and she read the twelfth one. They also sang the Mother Goose songs they knew.

With a repertoire of poems and with encouragement from the teacher the advanced first grader sometimes attempts to express his feelings in verse. He dictates:

"It's summer time now,
We love to play.
It's summer time now.
I'm going away."

A little girl dictated:

"I saw a little squirrel
Sitting in a tree.
He was eating a nut
And wouldn't look at me."

And again:

"It is raining here.
It is raining there
It is raining
On my dolly's hair."

Two children in the second grade each wrote one of the following:

"In the spring tulips come,
Tulips come, tulips come.
In the spring tulips come
Fresh and nice for ev'ry one."

"The little green leaves
Are coming on the trees
There are flowers
Everywhere
Here and there,
Where ever you go,
Go on tip-toe."

During story-book time the children may choose books to read, to have books read to them, to look at pictures, or to make their own books. One second grade group made a book called "A Second Grade Story Book." There were fifty-two contributions in the form of short stories varying from two lines to fifty lines of content. The teacher typed the stories. The children pasted them into the book and later gave their work to the library.

The Little Grey Goose, by Félicité Le fèvre is a favorite story with the children of the first grade. They like to hear it read and reread. They like the accumulative refrains and often say them while the teacher reads the story. This helps in the preparation for dramatizing it. The children volunteer to play the characters they like. Since there are more volunteers than characters, the group divides itself into two or three teams. The different teams have turns to practice. The team which acts the story best and speaks most clearly is chosen to give the play for the Junior Assembly. Committees work on costumes and scenery. The children try to make the play as complete and artistic as possible.

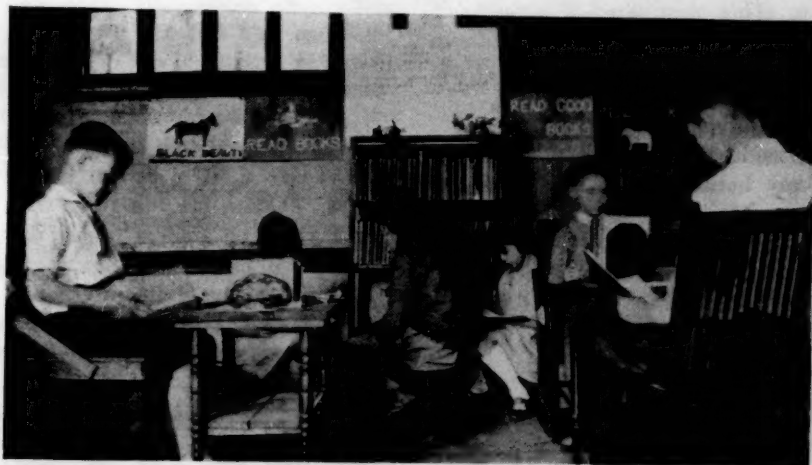
Story festivals are natural culminations of story-book time. Once a fourth grade group spontaneously shared their acquaintance with Paul Revere, Molly Pitcher, Nathan Hale, Betsy Ross and other char-

acters of Revolutionary times. For several months stories and poems about them had been read and reread. The several children began telling the stories they liked informally, emphasizing the details that appealed most to them. Some of the children told the same stories. From among the several story-tellers, the group selected those who could tell their stories well. The chosen story-tellers wished to tell their stories to the children of other grades. Not until the day before the festival was to be given did the children know that they were to participate in the program. It was their Festival of Stories. The members of the group who were not telling stories sat on the floor of the platform and formed an audience for the story-tellers who occupied chairs arranged in a semi-circle. The children from the other grades were seated in the auditorium. One child was chosen to explain the meaning of the festival and to introduce each story-teller as his turn came. The children told their stories well, and there was spontaneity and joy in this way of sharing experiences.

When literature is in the air children initiate activities of their own. Ralph found a story in a primer, "How Frank Took Care of the Flag." He decided to make a little play out of it. He selected the players. One boy was the Boy Scout, another the father and another the flag pole. Ralph was the manager. After the play had been practiced in the cloak room, it was given before the whole group. At the close, the audience was requested to sing "O Beautiful Banner."

When literature is in the air the children are busy, cheerful and happy. One boy once told his teacher, "I like to go to school. You put such happy things into my head. I can't help but like it." An older boy said: "Making puppets is always a lot of fun because you can use your imagination as much as you want to." Thus there develops purpose in achievement, growth in personality and cultural freedom.

The new school must be made beautiful. Its books should be beautiful. In it there must be time for the beautiful in poetry and story to be revealed and appreciated.



Raleigh, North Carolina

This classroom library was made by the children of a third grade.

Creative Verse

Written by Children of Different Ages

PEOPLE

I don't like
Faces
That are crossish
I don't like
People
That are rushy
I like
Medium quick ones—
Half slow.

*Nancy, 4½ years,
Broadoaks Nursery School,
Pasadena, California.*

PEGASUS

Pegasus, Pegasus who flies so high
Up to the beautiful, clear, blue sky
Stands for poetry.
Over the hill tops, over the trees
Wherever he goes he joyfully sees
Beauty in all things.

*Frank Blazunas, 6A,
Wm. H. Brett School,
Cleveland, Ohio.*

IF I WERE A PRISONER

If I were a prisoner,
I would watch the stars,
From inside the prison walls,
With my hands on the bars.

I wouldn't think of my troubles,
But of the lights above,
From the largest to the smallest,
Because big and small I love.

*Adolph Trolli, 6A,
Wm. H. Brett School,
Cleveland, Ohio.*

RAIN DROPS

When rain drops fall,
It seems as if they were tears of God,
God weeping over the people of the street
But the people put umbrellas over their
heads.

*Jennie Rossa, 5A,
Wm. H. Brett School,
Cleveland, Ohio.*

WINTER

Rain, rain, rain,
Wet to the skin.
Snow, snow, snow,
And ice that is thin.
Food, food, food,
There is none to be found.
Bambi suffers hunger,
Though he digs in the ground.
Poor deer!

*Third Grade,
Lakewood, Ohio.*

THE PEPPER POT

Down in a field one day in May
I waved to a little brown bee,
I said, "Come bee, oh play with me,
Don't work on such a lovely day."
The brown bee flew at me and then
He stung me hard it felt so hot,
I screamed "You bad, bad pepper pot,
I'll never play with you again."

*4B,
Cleveland, Ohio.*

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

MARY E. LEEPER

A. C. E. BRANCHES, ALL ABOARD FOR THE WINTER'S JOURNEY.

To really have a good time on any journey, details must be arranged before the start is made. Is your Branch ready?

Now is the time to read your guide book, send in your passport and pay for your ticket. Your guide book is, of course, the 1931 A. C. E. Yearbook, recently mailed to all branch presidents. You will want to read Mrs. Horn's report, a result of the information she gathered while preparing for Delegates' Day. You will find in it suggestions and enjoyment. In the Yearbook you will also find the A. C. E. constitution. Articles three and four will tell you how to buy your ticket, of course that means dues. *State Organizations* pay a flat rate of \$3.00 per year. They are entitled to send one voting delegate to the annual convention. *Local Branches* pay on the basis of members enrolled \$.10 for each member, the minimum amount to be paid being \$5.00 per year. Delegates' tickets are sent to Local Branches on a membership basis. All dues are sent to the Washington office. Now about your passport. It is a blue card sent, with Miss Abbot's recent letter, to branch presidents. Avoid inconvenience and delays by giving all information requested on this card and returning it to Headquarters promptly.

Several attractive side trips are offered to branches. One is to explore the field of acquainting your fellow teachers with the helpfulness of our Journal of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. Make your Branch famous by securing many new subscribers. You can have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping the Journal, the new subscriber and the children.

The second side trip that we suggest is that of joining the group of branches that were *One Hundred Per Cent* last year. You will find them listed in the Yearbook. Every member in these groups became a *Contributing* member of the A. C. E., paying

dues of \$1.00 or \$5.00 or \$10.00. These contributing members receive copies of all bulletins sent out from Headquarters during the year.

Indications are that there will be many new A. C. E. branches in 1931-32. A letter from a group of teachers in Melbourne, Australia, asks if they may come in as one of the A. C. E. branches. Many N. C. P. E. groups are planning to become active branches of the A. C. E. now that we are all one family.

The Buffalo, New York, Branch, has the distinction of being the first one to send in a "passport" for 1931-1932; the names of all the officers and the correct addresses are now in our files. Looking over a report we find Buffalo listed as an active branch in 1897. Perhaps that is why they are so far ahead this year.

All aboard Branches, let's get the mechanics out of the way now, and avoid disappointment and confusion at the end of the year.

1931 YEARBOOK

Contributing A. C. E. members and presidents of Branches have received the 1931 Yearbook. Make it your guide to intelligent membership. Look for the new feature, a practical classroom article. You will like it.

THE NEWEST PUBLICATION

The Supplement to Equipment and Supplies is receiving many favorable comments. Miss Frances Berry and the members of her Committee are to be congratulated on the editing of this helpful addition to the original Bulletin. The six pages of working drawings will be of great help to many teachers, price \$.15, with the original Bulletin, \$.55.

ANOTHER LIFE MEMBER

It is with real joy that we welcome Miss Ella Victoria Dobbs, a member of the faculty of the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, as a Life Member of the A. C. E. No one needs to be reminded of the service Miss Dobbs has rendered to the cause of early childhood education.

TENTATIVE PROGRAM
CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR NURSERY EDUCATION

PHILADELPHIA—NOVEMBER 12-14, 1931

THURSDAY MORNING

- 9:00-11:00—Registration
11:00-11:30—Conference Issues—George D. Stoddard (Iowa)
11:30-12:00—Implications of the White House Conference Report on the Pre-school Child—John E. Anderson (Minnesota)

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

- 12:30 —Luncheon at Temple University
2:00- 5:00—Discussion Groups

GROUP I. Nutrition and Health

- Chairman: Amy L. Daniels (Iowa)
Reporter: Mary E. Sweeney (Merrill-Palmer)
Discussion Leaders:
Mary S. Rose (Columbia)
C. A. Aldrich (Chicago)
Lydia Roberts (Chicago)

GROUP II. Preparation of Nursery School Teachers

- Chairman: Edna D. Baker (Evanston)
Reporter: Abigail Eliot (Boston)
Discussion Leaders:
Grace Langdon (Columbia)
Lulu Lancaster (Iowa State)
Harriet O'Shea (Purdue)

GROUP III. Parent Education and the Nursery School

- Chairman: Ralph Bridgman (Columbia)
Reporter: Hazel M. Cushing (Syracuse)
Discussion Leaders:
Christine Heinig (Columbia)
Ethel B. Waring (Cornell)

GROUP IV. Play Activities

- Chairman: Harriet M. Johnson (Bureau of Educational Experiments, N. Y.)
Reporter: Marie Fowler (Cornell)
Discussion Leaders:
Rose Alschuler (Winnetka)
Dorothea McCarthy (Georgia)
Jessie Stanton (Bureau of Educational Experiments, N. Y.)

GROUP V-A. Nursery School Procedures: Behavior Problems in the Nursery School

- Chairman: Wm. E. Blatz (Toronto)
Reporter: Elizabeth Moore Manwell (Syracuse)
Discussion Leaders:
Buford Johnson (Hopkins)
Harold H. Anderson (Iowa)
E. Lee Vincent (Merrill-Palmer)

GROUP VI. New Departures in Nursery School Programs

- Chairman: Willard C. Olson (Michigan)
Reporter: Nellie Perkins (Detroit)
Discussion Leaders:
W. E. Blatz (2nd day) (Toronto)
M. L. Reymert (Mooseheart)
Ruth Washburn (Yale)
J. Allan Hicks (Albany)

THURSDAY NIGHT

- 8:00-10:00—The nursery school in action (Motion pictures of representative schools; preceded in each case by a brief description.)

FRIDAY MORNING

- 9:00- 1:00—Registration
9:00-12:00—Exhibits of nursery school materials
9:00-12:00—Observation trips to Philadelphia nursery schools

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

- 2:00- 5:00—Discussion Groups

GROUP III. Parent Education and the Nursery School (second meeting)

GROUP IV. Play Activities (second meeting)

Group V-B.—Nursery School Procedures: Techniques of Teaching in Music and Story Periods.

- Chairman: May Hill (Western Reserve)
Reporter: Marie Louise Allen (Cleveland)
Discussion Leaders:
Dorothy Baruch (Pasadena)
Alice Thorn (Columbia)
Marian Walker (Columbia)

Group VI.—New Departures in Nursery School Programs (second meeting)

Group VII.—Minimal Essentials of Nursery Schools

- Chairman: Mary Dabney Davis (Washington)
Reporter: Amy Hostler (Western Reserve)

- Discussion Leaders:
Patty S. Hill (Columbia)
Emma Johnson (Temple)
Ira M. Allen (Highland Park, Michigan)

Group VIII.—Psychological Measurements for Preschool Children

- Chairman: Rachel Stutsman (Merrill-Palmer)

Reporter: Helen Koch (Chicago)

Discussion Leaders:

Beth Wellman (Iowa)

Dorothy Van Alstyne (Chicago)

Metta Rust (Columbia)

FRIDAY NIGHT

7:00—Conference dinner

Presiding—Lois Hayden Meek (Columbia)

Greetings—President Beury (Temple)

Patty S. Hill (Columbia)

Address—Wm. H. Kilpatrick (Columbia)

SATURDAY MORNING

9:00-10:00—Business meeting

10:15-12:00—Five-minute summaries by group reporters

General Summary of the Conference—Lois Hayden Meek (Columbia)

Adjournment.



THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

An International Congress of Childhood held in Paris, France, from July 26 to August 1st, 24 nations participating, and 3,300 delegates registered, the Minister of Public Instruction presiding over the first meeting, well known educators, both men and women, coming from all over Europe and even from America to attend. What does it all mean? Is it not a sign that the world is waking up to the fact that the hope of the future is in the right beginning for the children of all nations?

The opening meeting was held in the amphitheatre of the Sorbonne, and was presided over by the Minister of Public Instruction, Monsieur Mario Roustan, who gave a short history of the development of the Ecole Maternelle in the last 50 years. At first it was no more than a day-nursery where children under school age were parked while their mothers went to work. It was presided over by women of little or no education who simply kept the children out of mischief. In the years since the war great strides have been made, and the preschool child has become the first unit in public education. The Ecole Maternelle is in every public school (Ecole Communale) in France, and the presiding geniuses are not so much trained teachers as "trained mothers," as M. Roustan put it.

There were well known speakers on important subjects like psychology, hygiene, music, art, or practical talks on equipment, materials, eurythmics with demonstrations by groups of children.

On Monday afternoon after the Congress opened, the delegates were received at the Hotel De Ville by the President of the Municipal Council, and were shown the beautiful reception rooms of this very wonderful building.

On Tuesday afternoon we visited two new

and model schools at Suresnes, a Paris suburb, and were received by the Maire Henri Sellier, a well known educator, who has made the schools for little people his chief hobby of late. The buildings and grounds were ideal, and the equipment unusual. A little brook lined with concrete ran through the playground where the toddlers could sail their boats; a toboggan slide filled one side of the yard; and in the centre was a big sand tank with four large trees in it. In a separate enclosure was a glassed-in solarium with vita glass where anemic children did their work; and just outside were some bright colored cots and umbrellas looking most inviting for an outdoor nap. For our entertainment some of the children sang folk songs and danced in costume, on a little platform in the garden.

On Thursday afternoon a Song and Play Festival was held in a large theatre with children from all over the city. Dances and costumes typical of the different French provinces were featured. In the late afternoon we were invited to a Garden Party at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a beautiful palace on the Quai d'Orsay, with a lovely garden at the back. Monsieur Briand was unable to be present, but his representative was there, with the Minister of Public Instruction and other dignitaries.

The following Saturday, the closing meeting was held in a large gymnasium, and again those of the visitors who could speak French were asked to "prendre la parole." There were short speeches from Roumania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Germany, Poland, Spain ("The new Spanish Republic") and the United States. All stressed the fact that the hope of a peaceful world was centered in the children. Your delegate ended with the motto over the gate of the Liévin Community House: "We who desire peace must write it in the hearts of our children."

HELEN M. CRAIG,
Wellesley, Massachusetts.

BOOK REVIEWS

Editor, ALICE TEMPLE

NEW BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Compiled by Eloise Ramsey

IN this bibliography the selection has been made from books published within the past two years, which are variously suited to the kindergarten-primary level. So far as possible the annotations represent what has been gathered directly from children concerning their reactions to the books. Some new editions and reprints are included. A few titles from the fall lists for 1931 have been added.

PICTURE BOOKS

Many of the titles included in this section might well be grouped under stories. Either the quality of the pictures or the reactions of the children have determined the placing.

ALDIN, CECIL: *The White Puppy Book*. Oxford, n.d. \$1.25.

Lively pictures accompanied by an entertaining dog's diary in rhymes.

BESKOW, ELSA: *Pelle's New Suit*; il. by the author; tr. by Marion L. Woodburn. Harper, n.d. \$1.25.

One of the best among the picture-story books. Enjoyed throughout the Kindergarten-Primary level.

The Tale of the Wee Little Old Woman; tr. by Marion L. Woodburn. Harper, 1930. \$1.25.

Enjoyed frankly for the charm of its pictures. The story is very slight.

BROCK, EMMA L.: *The Runaway Sardine*; il. by the author. Knopf, 1929. \$2.00.

This book is already an established favorite. It is asked for over and over again.

To Market! To Market!; il. by the author. Knopf, 1930. \$1.75.

A delightful repetitive story that the

younger children demand again and again. The pictures are charming.

CHARLES, ROBERT H.: *A Roundabout Turn*; with drawings by L. Leslie Brooke. Warne, 1930. \$1.50

A perfect nonsense tale with pictures such as only Leslie Brooke can make. For children of all ages.

CLEMENT, MARGUERITE: *All the World is Colour*; with pictures by Purie and Germaine L'Hardy. Farrar, 1930. \$4.00.

This "rainbow" picture book excites considerable interest in the subject of color. A useful book throughout the elementary school.

DOMBROWSKI, BARONESS: ("K. O. S." pseud.) *Just Horses*; il. by the author. Macmillan, 1930. \$2.50.

The text is too difficult for the younger children, but they like the pictures. It should prove a useful book in all grades of the elementary school.

FALLS, C. B.: *The Modern ABC Book*. Day, 1930. \$2.00.

Children who are beginning to be curious about the "why" of machinery like these excellent and highly modern pictures. Not for the youngest.

HADER, BERTA AND ELMER: *Under the Pig-nut Tree*; il. by the authors. Knopf, 1930. \$1.25.

A gay picture book for little children. Suitable for springtime.

KING, ELIZABETH: *Today's ABC*; il. by the author. McBride, 1929. \$1.50.

An excellent introduction to transportation from the small child's point of view.

KOZISEK, JOSEF: *A Forest Story*; tr. by R. D.

Szalatnay; il. by Rudolf Mates; ed. by Helen Murphy. Macmillan, 1929. \$3.50.

The Magic Flutes; tr. by Clara V. Winlow; il. by Rudolf Mates. Longman, 1929. \$3.50.

These Czechoslovakian picture books deserve a place in the library corner for their gayety alone. Children enjoy them thoroughly.

KRUM, CHARLOTTE: *The Jingly ABC's*; il. by Pauline B. Adams, Row, 1929. \$80.

An attempt to make an ABC book which will build interest in language. The sound or function of each letter of the alphabet is described in rhyme with an accompanying illustration.

MARTIN, MARY STEICHEN: *The First Picture Book*; il. with photographs by Edward Steichen. Harcourt, 1930. \$2.00.

This book has been designed for the pre-school child. Opinion seems much divided as to its value. However, very young children seem to enjoy it.

MOE, LOUIS: *Little Bear-cub, and The Dressed Up Pig*. Coward-McCann, 1930. \$1.00.

Excellent humorous pictures in black-and-white.

NICHOLSON, WILLIAM: *The Pirate Twins*; il. by the author. Coward-McCann, 1929. \$1.50.

This picture book is almost as well liked as the artist's *Clever Bill*, which is high praise. Both are distinguished picture-books.

PETERSHAM, MAUD AND MISKA: *The Ark of Father Noah and Mother Noah*; il. by the authors. Doubleday, 1930. \$2.00.

This book should be used primarily as an artistic picture book with a rollicking sense of fun.

PLANCH, WILLY: *The Lazy Teddy Bear*; tr. by Joseph Auslander. Longmans, 1931.

An amusing story which bears the test of much repetition.

Spin Top Spin, and *Rosmarie and Thyme*; with pictures by Elsa Eisgruber. Macmillan, 1929. \$3.00.

These delicate pictures have much the same kind of appeal that those of Kate Greenaway and Willebeek Le Mair have offered.

SEIDMANN-FREUD, MRS. TOM: *Peregrin and the Goldfish*; il. by the author. Macmillan, 1929. \$2.00.

Children enjoy *Peregrin* frankly as a picture book. It is a fine example of the German picture book.

SEWELL, HELEN: *ABC for Everybody*. Macmillan, 1930. \$1.50.

A modern picture book for the modern child. Vigorous color and spirited drawing combine to give this book atmosphere. Children spend much time over its pages.

WINLOW, CLARA V.: *The Kitten That Grew Too Fat*; il. by Inez Hogan. Macrae, 1929. \$1.50.

A picture story that young children have enjoyed.

In the sections devoted to "Experience Stories;" "Modern Animal Stories;" "Folk Tales;" "Fairy Tales," the titles of many other picture books are listed.

POETRY AND RHYMES

ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM: *Robin Redbreast and Other Verses*; pictures by Helen Allingham and others. (Little Library). Macmillan, 1930. \$1.00.

Under its original title *Rhymes for the Young Folk*, this book was an established favorite for two generations. In its new format it is winning many new admirers.

DE LA MARE, WALTER: *Poems for Children*. Holt, 1930. \$2.50.

Poems from *Songs of Childhood* and *Peacock Pie* are included together with some poems that have not appeared in any previous collection. Parents and teachers will enjoy the introduction by Mr. De la Mare on the subject of poetry for children.

HARRINGTON, MILDRED, comp.: *Ring A'Round*; il. by Corydon Bell. Macmillan, 1930. \$3.00.

A good collection of tried favorites. It has the additional interest and value of being a "family book."

HUTCHINSON, VERONICA S., ed.: *Chimney Corner Poems*; il. with drawings by Lo's Lenski. Minton, 1929. \$2.50.

A well-chosen collection of poetry that has appeal. There is a good balance between the new and the old.

MOTHER GOOSE: *Mother Goose*; il. by Berta and Elmer Hader. Coward-McCann, 1930. \$3.50.

Decidedly not a first Mother Goose, but a pleasant book with which children may renew acquaintance with nursery rhymes.

TIPPET, JAMES: *I Go A'Traveling*; il. by Elizabeth T. Wolcott. Harper, 1929. \$.75.

Simple verses that are read by children with evident satisfaction.

WELLES, WINIFRED: *Skiping Along Alone*; il. by Marguerite Davis. Macmillan, 1931. \$1.75.

This recent book of verse has exquisite poetic quality. It should become a favorite. The pictures lack the imaginative quality of the text.

EXPERIENCE STORIES

In this section the stories listed either are told directly from the point of view of a child character, or deal realistically with experiences or things which belong to the everyday world of childhood.

ALDIS, DOROTHY: *Squiggles or The Little Red Cape*; il. by Margaret Freeman. Minton, 1930. \$2.00.

An excellent realistic story which holds the attention of children. It has proved a favorite in the second and third grades.

BARUCH, DOROTHY W.: *The Two Bobbies*; il. by Phyllis I. Britcher. Harper, 1930. \$2.00.

Stories dealing with the everyday environment of children. Well liked by kindergarten children.

BERRY, ERICK: *Penny Whistle*; il. by the author. Macmillan, 1930. \$1.00.

A slight story with bright pictures offers pleasant recreational reading.

BESKOW, ELSA: *Aunt Brown's Birthday*; il. by the author. Harper, 1930. \$2.50.

Here we meet again the charming elderly ladies who made *Aunt Brown*, *Aunt Green*, and *Aunt Lavender* a memorable book. Children in the second and third grades have thoroughly enjoyed this book and its excellent pictures.

DALGLIESH, ALICE: *The Little Wooden Farmer and The Story of the Jungle Pool*; il. by Theodora Baumeister. Macmillan, 1930. \$1.00.

These stories encourage the play spirit.

EVERSON, FLORENCE M. AND HOWARD: *The Secret Cave*; with decorations by L. S. Wakefield. Dutton, 1930. \$2.00.

There is genuine imaginative quality in this story. It is excellent for reading aloud.

FIELD, RACHEL: *Pocket-handkerchief Park*; il. by the author. Doubleday, 1929. \$.75.

A story which has definite appeal for the children in the third grade. "Read it again" has been the response.

GAWTHORPE, GRACE B.: *Canary Village*. Stokes, 1930. \$1.00.

A story of village life in which children and birds figure. Pleasant recreational reading.

GRISHINA, N.: *Gresha and His Clay Pig*; il. by the author. Stokes, 1930. \$2.00.

This realistic story has more than a touch of the fairy tale about it.

LA RUE, MABEL G.: *Little Indians*; il. by Mard and Miska Petersham. Macmillan, 1930. \$.80.

These simple stories of Indian child life offer interesting reading material of a realistic type. Attractive format.

LOFTING, HUGH: *Noisy Nora*; pictured and printed by the author. Stokes, 1929. \$1.25.

Children have evinced the liveliest interest in this "almost true" and highly moral tale. Well told and genuinely amusing with a charming format.

ORTON, HELEN FULLER: *Grandmother's Cooky*

Jar; il. by M. L. Frantz. Stokes, 1930. \$1.50.

A home story. Good for reading aloud.

PETERSHAM, MAUD AND MISKA: *Miki*; il. by the authors. Doubleday, 1929. \$2.00.

Here is a real addition to the children's bookshelf. "I love Miki" said one little girl. Her reaction is typical.

PHILLIPS, ETHEL CALVERT: *The Little Rag Doll*; il. by Lois Lenski. Houghton, 1930. \$2.00.

A good doll story for reading aloud. This story is enjoyed by children fortunate enough to have been introduced to Miss Phillips' stories by way of *Wee Ann*.

READ, HELEN S.: *Billy's Letter*; il. by Eleanor Lee; ed. by Patty S. Hill and Mary M. Reed. Scribner, 1929. \$.60.

Tip the Fireman; il. by Eleanor Lee; ed. by Patty S. Hill and Mary M. Reed. Scribner, 1929, \$.60.

Mary and the Policeman; il. by Eleanor Lee; ed. by Patty S. Hill and Mary M. Reed. Scribner, 1929. \$.60.

Mr. Brown's Grocery Store; il. by Eleanor Lee; ed. by Patty S. Hill and Mary M. Reed. Scribner, 1929. \$.60.

These four books provide simple experience reading for children able to read a little for themselves. The pictures are ordinary.

TIPPET, JAMES S.: *Busy Carpenters*; il. by Elizabeth T. Wolcott. World Book, 1929. \$.68.

Simple rhymes that interpret familiar things. Easily read by children.

WHITE, ELIZA ARM: *The Green Door*; il. by Lisl Hummel. Houghton, 1930. \$2.00.

Interesting for children who like a fairly long story about children's experiences. It is most worth while to encourage interest in Miss White's admirable stories.

WHITNEY, ELINOR: *Timothy and the Blue Cart*; il. by Berta and Elmer Hader. Stokes, 1930. \$1.50.

A country story of considerable interest for the city child.

BOOKS FOR THE MACHINE AGE.

BARUCH, DOROTHY W.: *Big Fellow at Work*; il. by Berta and Elmer Hader. Harper, 1930. \$1.50.

Children in the third grade have followed this story of the steam shovel with considerable interest.

MACNEER, MAY AND WARD, LYNND: *Stop Tim!*; il. by Lynd Ward, Macmillan, 1930. \$1.50.

This story of the automobile that wanted to go faster and faster is entertaining for reading aloud. Children probably enjoy the pictures as much, if not more, than the story.

SWIFT, HILDEGARDE HOYT: *Little Blacknose; the Story of a Pioneer*; il. by Lynd Ward. Harcourt, 1929. \$2.00.

The life story of a locomotive has proved excellent for reading aloud. The touch of repetition helps the younger children to appreciate the story. Probably it will not be read by many children below the third or fourth grades.

MODERN ANIMAL STORIES

CRAWFORD, PHYLLIS: *The Blot: Little City Cat*; il. by H. C. Holling. Cope, 1930. \$2.00.

A well told story to which little children listen with keen interest.

GAG, WANDA: *The Funny Thing*; il. by the author. Coward-McCann, 1929. \$1.50.

Almost as delightful as *Millions of Cats*. Children welcome it as a story and a picture book. It holds interest throughout the kindergarten-primary level.

FLACK, MARJORIE: *Angus and the Ducks*; il. by the author. Doubleday, 1930. \$1.00.

A delightful story of a "Scotty" for which children ask over and over again. One of the best among the new books for younger children. Good pictures.

HADER, BERTA AND ELMER: *Two Funny*

Clowns; il. by the authors. Coward-McCann, 1929. \$1.50.

A jolly story about Flopps, a dog who very nearly joined the circus. Children like it.

HOGAN, INEZ: *The White Kitten and the Blue Plate*; il. by the author. Macmillan, 1930. \$1.00.

Well liked in the first and second grades.

LENSKI, LOIS: *Two Brothers and their Animal Friends*; il. by the author. Stokes, 1929. \$1.50.

A pleasant little nonsense story which children like fairly well. Repetition marks the style. The pictures are amusing.

WELLS, RHEA: *Beppo the Donkey*; il. by the author. Doubleday, 1930. \$2.00.

This story is good for reading aloud. The Sicilian background provides interest for children past the kindergarten-primary level.

WELLS, RHEA: *Coco the Goat*; il. by the author. Doubleday, 1929. \$2.00.

Coco is a lively goat who belonged to Garito. His adventures have an authentic Spanish setting. Good for reading aloud to children who are ready for long stories.

WIESE, KURT: *Karoo the Kangaroo*; il. by the author. Coward-McCann, 1929. \$1.50.

For children this story of a baby kangaroo has a definite appeal. They like the excellent illustrations.

Wallie the Walrus; il. by the author. Coward-McCann, 1930. \$1.50.

Nearly as popular as *Karoo the Kangaroo*.

WILLIAMSON, HAMILTON: *Little Elephant*; with pictures by Berta and Elmer Hader. Doubleday, 1930. \$.75.

Not so well liked as *A Monkey Tale*, but still popular in its own way.

A Monkey Tale; pictures by Berta and Elmer Hader. Doubleday, 1929. \$.75.

This is the favorite among the Williamson books. It is lively and amusing.

FOLK TALES

BABBIT, ELLEN C.: *The Animals' Own Story*

Book; il. by Margery Stocking. Century, 1930. \$1.50.

This "new book of old folk tales chiefly American" provides an interesting collection for the story-teller's bookshelf. Children have liked very much some of the stories included. Good silhouette illustrations.

BOTSFORD, FLORENCE HUDSON: *Picture Tales from the Italian*; il. by Grace Gilkison. Stokes, 1929. \$1.25.

Directly told, humorous tales which offer fresh material for story-telling.

CARRICK, VALERY: *Animal Picture Tales from Russia*; il. by the author. Stokes, 1930. \$1.50.

Another book by Valery Carriek is always welcome. These Russian picture tales have made their own place in the esteem of children.

International Kindergarten Union. Literature Committee, comp.: *Told Under the Green Umbrella*; with pictures by Grace Gilkison. Macmillan, 1930. \$3.00.

This collection includes twenty-six folk tales in authentic versions. One of the best guides to folk literature for young children.

MODERN FAIRY TALES AND FANTASIES

BAKER, MARGARET: *Noddy Goes A-Plowing*; il. by Mary Baker. Duffield, 1930. \$2.00.

This story is done in the folk tale tradition. Children seem to enjoy its graceful style very much.

CASSERLEY, ANN E.: *Roseen*; il. by the author. Harper, 1929. \$1.50.

Irish fairy tales that have interested groups of children in the third grade. Whimsical and spirited in style.

EMERSON, CAROLINE D.: *Mr. Nip and Mr. Tuck*; il. by Lois Lenski. Dutton, 1930.

Children who liked *A Hat-tub Tale* may enjoy hearing its sequel.

KUEBLER, KATHARINE: *Hansel the Gander*; il. by Ilse. Bischoff. Morrow, 1930. \$2.00.

A charmingly told tale that has pleased children at the stage when they are beginning

to enjoy a touch of fantasy. Beautiful illustrations.

WIESE, KURT: *Liang and Lo*; il. by the author. Doubleday, 1930. \$1.50.

This spirited story is liked for reading aloud, although it is probably too difficult for children to read for themselves below the 3rd or 4th grades. Artistically it is one of the best among recent books.

REPRINTS AND NEW EDITIONS

DRUMMOND, HENRY: *The Monkey That Would Not Kill*; il. by Lois Lenski. Dodd, 1929. \$1.50.

In its new dress the favorite story should win new friends. Excellent for reading aloud.

FIELD, RACHEL: *The Pointed People*; il. with silhouettes by the author. Macmillan, 1930. \$1.25.

This title was first published by the Yale University Press in 1924. The new edition contains seven additional poems. These simple verses appeal to children in the second and third grades.

FRANCE, ANATOLE: *Our Children and Girls and Boys*; il. by L. M. Boutet de Monvel. Duffield, 1931. \$3.00.

Two established books are now reprinted in one volume. Boutet de Monvel's pictures are essential in the experience of children.

ROBERTS, ELIZABETH MADOX: *Under the Tree*; il. by Francis D. Bedford. Viking, 1930. \$2.50.

This fine edition of a distinguished book is most timely. It is probably the most important book of poetry for children by an American writer. Happily children like *Under the Tree*.

FROM THE FALL LISTS: 1931

ALDIS, DOROTHY: *7 To 7*; il. by Margaret Freeman. Minton, 1931. \$1.50.

An ABC for every day. The verses are only moderately good and the pictures rather dull.

ASHMORE, MARIAN: *Lost, Stolen or Strayed*; il. by Cecil Aldin. Scribner, 1931. \$2.50.

A jolly animal picture book, with the kind of pictures we expect from Cecil Aldin.

D'AULAIRE, INGRI AND EDGAR PARIN: *The Magic Rug*; il. by the authors. Doubleday, 1931. \$2.50.

Probably the children who would most enjoy this interesting story would be too old to be attracted by the picture book format. The pictures are not particularly good.

BELL, THELMA M.: *Black Face*; il. by Corydon Bell. Doubleday, 1931. \$1.50.

A lamb traveling on a steam engine offers a new idea for a story.

BESKOW, ELSA: *Adventures of Peter and Lotta*; il. by the author. Harper, 1931. \$2.00.

Olle's Ski Trip; tr. by Siri Andrews; il. by the author. Harper, n. d. \$2.00.

Peter's Voyage; il. by the author. Knopf, 1931. \$2.00.

It is good fortune for American children that so many of Elsa Beskow's picture books are now available with English text.

BROCK, EMMA L.: *The Greedy Goat*; il. by the author. Knopf, 1931. \$1.75.

The pictures are not equal to those of Miss Brock's earlier books, but the story is the best thing she has done.

BRYAN, DOROTHY M.: *Johnny Penguin*; il. by Marguerite Bryan. Doubleday, 1931. \$1.00.

And now penguins for the youngest! We predict this book will be liked.

DEMING, THERESA O.: *The Indians in Winter Camp*; il. by Edwin O. Deming. Laidlaw, 1931. \$1.00.

A somewhat more mature story than *Little Eagle*, and one dealing with more adult phases of Indian life. For children in the third grade it would be an interesting book.

Little Eagle, A Story of Indian Life; il. by Edwin W. Deming. Laidlaw, 1931. \$.90.

An excellent and authentic account of Indian life and customs told in a style well suited to young readers.

GAG, WANDA: *Snippy and Snappy*; il. by the author. Coward-McCann, 1931. \$1.50.

A new book by Wanda Gag is always a publishing event.

HADER, BERTA AND ELMER: *Summer Under the Pig-nut Tree*; il. by the authors. Knopf, 1931. \$1.25.

The second book about the elf who lived in a pig-nut tree. Clear and pleasing pictures which are much superior to the text.

(Continued on page 165)

AMONG THE MAGAZINES

Editor, ELLA RUTH BOYCE

A survey of Children's Literature as it appears in the magazines for the six months ending September first yields the following articles, listed here for those who have a special interest in this field, but not reviewed:

IN MARCH—Who Buys Books for Boys?—Publishers' Weekly, the issue of the 28th.

IN APRIL—Children's Reading, by A. H. Starke—Library Quarterly; What Do Children Like to Read?—M. E. Pennell—Publishers' Weekly—issue of the 25th.

IN MAY—Reading Habits of Boys and Girls, are they Changing? E. H. Garst—Better Homes and Gardens, the issue of May 31. Studies of Children's Interests in Reading—A. I. Gates, Elementary School Journal. Opening Magic Casements—V. M. Puhek—Elementary School Review.

Arousing and Discovering Children's Interests in English—C. Addicott and others—Elementary English Review.

IN JUNE—Writing Down to Children—P. Bacon—Saturday Review of Literature—issue of June 20.

Budding Bookbuyers—K. Lord—Publishers' Weekly—issue of June 27.

Children's Reading, a summary of a report submitted to the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection—R. L. Duffus—School and Society.

What Do Children Read?—Questionnaire, Fort Wayne Public Library—Libraries.

In the magazine PARENTS, Alice Dagleish, instructor in Story Telling for Children, Teachers' College, Columbia University, conducts regularly a department of book reviews for boys and girls. In the September issue she says that there have been so many requests for a beginning book list that she is using the space usually devoted to reviews for short lists of books for the youngest children and also to answer some of the questions most frequently asked by parents. She endorses Mother Goose; gives books suitable for two year olds and of fairy tales says "Should young children have

fairy tales? Certainly, though for children under six or seven these should be simple and carefully selected."

In the August issue of PARENTS, Annie E. Moore, writing under the title "Shall We Banish the Fairies?" treats this question at some length. She first discusses the question which she says "seems to have an almost rhythmic rise and fall," though she feels that there is probably constant opposition to fairy tales which "occasionally finds an avenue of public utterance." She feels that the discussion is very loosely done with little definition of its implications and in her article attempts to define it first of all. First we find that fairy and folk tales are usually listed together and accepting this somewhat inclusive grouping, she says, "A critical reading of a large collection of these old tales shows at once that their variety is infinite, that they differ from each other individually quite as much as they differ from stories supposedly belonging to a different type of literature. They can no more be accepted or condemned wholesale than can realistic stories or poetry." She can not understand a wholesale objection to fairy tales on any other basis than the feeling of some people that children should have no stories of an imaginative type—those "who would restrict their literary diet to the purely informational, historical or realistic." Surely a great loss whether we are thinking of folk or modern tales. There is another type of criticism sometimes heard — "Certain competent critics fear not only the setting up of terrifying images in the minds of children, they point out also that untrue and distorted ideas regarding the common affairs of life are apt to be implanted." Miss Moore feels that this point has some validity and says "It seems probable that such results might ensue if these children are not being given at the same time first-hand experiences, and excellent pictures and stories of a realistic sort. Nature experiences should parallel if they do not precede

the fairy stories which introduce certain animal characters." Another point which must enter into this discussion is the maturity of the children, and stories should be chosen which are suitable for the varying ages of children. Also there are varieties of versions, some being much more artistic than others. Finally she believes that each story should be judged on its own merits and that "Well developed children from seven to nine years of age who read easily and who have had a rich and well balanced selection of literature, can probably be safely left with any standard collection of fairy tales prepared for them."

MENTAL HYGIENE, in its quarterly issue dated July, 1931, publishes *A Study of Seven Hundred Maladjusted School-Teachers* by Frances V. Mason. The purpose of the study was to secure information about a group of school-teachers who had become so maladjusted to the social life of which they were a part that it had been necessary for them to be placed in hospitals near New York City and while the author recognizes that it may not be applicable to other teaching groups, the findings should be of interest to all who are in the teaching profession. It is presented with full details—we will quote only a part of the conclusions.

1. Teaching as a profession did not seem to be the direct cause of the psychoses.
2. Teachers were committed to hospitals at an earlier age than the general psychopathic population.
3. There was a higher percentage of unmarried teachers than of married ones.
4. The psychoses most prevalent in the group were dementia precox and manic-depressive psychosis. Paranoia seemed to rank higher in the teacher group than among maladjusted groups generally.

NOTE: The author, in commenting on this fact, says "Certain characteristics of paranoia as a mental disease and of teachers as a professional group, seem to be in harmony. In paranoia there seem to be certain systematized ideas underlying the psychosis. School-teachers would fall readily into this group. Since they are over-systematized from the time they begin their preparation for teaching." And in a somewhat more complimentary vein, he says, "In paranoia there must be an intelligence at least above the average to weave the elaborate schemes around the central fixed idea.

Teachers, taken as a whole, are probably slightly above the general population in intelligence."

5. No racial conclusions can be made from the findings of this study.
6. Drug addiction and the use of alcohol were apparently negligible factors.
7. 10 per cent recovered, 20 per cent improved, 4 per cent were much improved.
8. In view of the fact that physical disorders, in many cases not due directly to school work, were found in a large percentage of the group, it would seem that more attention might be given to that phase of a teacher's life—that more provisions might be made for leave of absence and even in some cases compulsory leave. Possibly regular physical examinations might be encouraged.

NOTE: In Pennsylvania they are required annually by law.

9. Since heredity seemed to be an important factor in this group, some consideration might be given to family histories in the selection of prospective teachers.
10. In diversity of interests and in the possession of those traits that make for a well-rounded personality, this group of teachers was particularly lacking. School systems could be of assistance here by giving teachers more leisure for outside activities and freedom from too strenuous duties in the schoolroom, so that fatigue would not interfere with physical activities after school hours. Particularly should teacher training institutions encourage participation in varied activities other than teaching, which the student should carry over into his teaching career.
11. An intellectual status above the average was not effective in producing emotional control.
12. It is fair to assume that the education received even in our institutions of high merit is not of a type to help a student overcome hereditary predispositions toward maladjustment.
13. A wide range of teaching positions was disclosed.
14. The study points to the need of teaching simple principles of mental hygiene to all prospective teachers, as well as to those in service. While behavior clinics for children are very valuable and necessary at the present time, it will be more

worth while to direct effort toward helping teachers to form wise mental habits themselves, so that they in turn may be guides to the young children in their care and thereby reduce the number of mal-adjusted teachers and pupils.

15. Further data are needed to supplement this study in its every phase.

The NATION'S SCHOOLS in its August issue discusses somewhat the same question from a different and less detailed point of view. Writing under the title *How Teaching Affects the Teacher Over a Period of Years*. P. W. Horn, president of the Texas Technological College, gives a more casual survey of the dangers of too close adherence to the profession of teaching. His thesis is that "one of the greatest educational agencies in the world is the job. . . . Yet it is undeniably the fact that in certain types of work the influence of the work upon the worker is distinctly bad." Accepting these statements, it becomes important to discover what is the effect of the teaching job upon the teacher. He believes that no generalizations should be made but that since there is "in many quarters a belief that after a certain number of years additional experience in teaching becomes a liability rather than an asset," it is worth while to sur-

vey the field, find out what are the dangers and how to avoid them.

He lists as the first danger that of authority—that which the teacher has herself as well as that which is exerted over her. He thinks this danger may be overcome by the substitution of "leading for driving." The second danger which he lists is the teacher's contact with persons and things that are in some manner inferior to her. To overcome this he would stress the "glory of childhood rather than its weakness" and further he would have the teacher consciously make other associations with those of her own level. He says "for one grade teacher who neglects her work on account of her social contacts, there are twenty teachers whose work would be better if they had more social contacts." Third, he lists overemphasis on small things—his one special illustration being that of a teacher who spent much time on teaching children exactness in making quotation marks. A further danger lies in the fact that often the teacher's work becomes mechanical, what is popularly called getting into a rut. His remedy for all these ills is summed up in one word—"growth." Growth should be fostered in every possible way and finally he says "It is the cardinal item of the teacher's faith that in the long run humanity is worth while."



(Continued from page 119)

- DE LA MARE, WALTER. *Peacock Pie*; il. by W. Heath Robinson. Holt, 1917. *Songs of Childhood*. Longmans, 1902. Same; il. by Estella Canziani. Longmans, 1923.
- FIELD, RACHEL. *Pointed People*; il. with silhouettes by the author. Macmillan, 1930. *Taxis and Toadstools*; with decorations by the author. Doubleday, 1926.
- FYLEMAN, ROSE. *Fairies and Chimneys*. Doran, 1920.
- HARRINGTON, MILDRED, comp. *Ring A'Round*; il. by Corydon Bell. Macmillan, 1930.
- HOWARD, WINIFRED: *Out of the Everywhere*; il. by Elizabeth Montgomery. Oxford, 1929.
- LINDSAY, VACHEL. *Johnny Appleseed* and other poems; il. by George H. Richards. Macmillan, 1928.
- LOFTING, HUGH. *Porridge Poetry*; il. by the author. Stokes, 1924.
- MILLER, MARY BRITTON. *Menagerie*; il. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1928.
- MILNE, A. A. *Now We Are Six*; il. by E. H. Shepard. Dutton, 1927. *When We Were Very Young*; il. by E. H. Shepard. Dutton, 1924.
- ROBERTS, ELIZABETH MADOX. *Under the Tree*. Heubseh, 1922. Same; il. by Francis D. Bedford. Viking, 1930.
- ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA. *Sing-Song*; il. by Marguerite Davis (Little Library). Macmillan, 1918.
- THOMPSON, BLANCHE JENNINGS, Ed. *Silver Pennies*; il. by Winifred Bromhall (Little Library). Macmillan, 1925.
- TURNER, NANCY BYRD. *Maggie Lane*; il. by Decie Merwin. Harcourt, 1927.
- WELLES, WINIFRED. *Skippping Along Alone*; il. by Marguerite Davis. Macmillan, 1931.



Correction: *Diary Record—Making a Boat*, by Ruth Steck, in the October issue of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, should be credited to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The unit was developed under the direction of Miss Avis McHenry.

RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

Editor, ELIZABETH MOORE MANWELL

Children's Reading.—There are to be found many lists of books recommended for children's reading, but none constructed on quite the same foundation as the guide prepared at the Institute of Character Research at the University of Iowa.

For several years this institute has been surveying the field of children's literature, with a view to determine its value for character development. The results of their study of fairy tales were published in Volume 1 of this series, while the results of their study of fiction are presented in the present volume.*

Literature has, in the opinion of authors, three important functions for the reader,—it serves to recreate character, to integrate personality and to develop insight. Recent investigations have shown that morale cannot be dogmatically taught as such, and that direct precepts have little effect in guiding the child in his behaviour. But there are many influences which indirectly affect the child's attitudes, tastes, ideals and behaviour, and one of the more important of these is the reading of fiction.

"The guide to literature, of which this book is the second unit, means to lift out from the mass of commonplace the best selections, to label them as superior and even to specify their degree of merit . . . there are stories, tenaciously persisting in the world, so poor that they should drop out of sight and . . . there are others of finer texture . . . This book is evidence that it is possible on closer scrutiny to define different levels of excellence and to be reasonably sure that a gradation according to degree of superiority is on the whole clearly determinable."

There are eight standards used in this study to measure the literary quality of books:

1. *Organic unity* was considered as one essential, i.e., a story where each character, in-

cident, or paragraph is so organized into the main theme that the product is a completed whole. Not only are essential themes given proper emphasis but restraint is observed and secondary patterns are subordinated to the main design.

2. *Right craftsmanship* is also important. This has reference to diction, phrasing, sentence structure and rhythm, paragraphing, and the mechanics of punctuation, grammar and syntax. "The child as much as the adult deserves and loves the master hand in literature."

3. *Emotional tone* is another standard. "The secret of this hitherto rather indefinite and indescribable characteristic of good literature is the skillful use by the author of the imagery from the 'lower senses,' i.e., touch, taste, smell, equilibrium, pain, temperature, kinaesthetic, and organic." "The writers who seek the door to the intellect use the eye. Those who burst the doors to our feelings use the warm and rich intimacy of lower sense imagery and its connected emotion pictures."

4. *Effectiveness.* Good literature must be forceful, it must appeal to the basic interests, needs and experiences of humanity, having fundamental human significance.

5. *Artistry in appeal.* A good story teaches its moral gracefully, and in a non-didactic way, avoiding such forms as "this story teaches," and "from this tale we learn."

6. *Truthfulness.* "The temperature is often felt to play fast and loose with fact and law for the sake of impressing children with moral truths. The nature-fakers are often guilty of this fault." This does not mean that there is not proper room for tales of fancy and fiction when no one is deceived thereby, "all one requires is that the characters and situations shall be true to human nature and to the world order."

7 *The refinement of fundamental human attitudes.* While human beings have deeper cravings which bind them to the earth, they

*Starbuck, Edwin Diller, and others. *A Guide To Books For Character: Volume II, Fiction.* New York. Macmillan, 1930. Pp. x, 579.

are also aspiring beings, and should find in their reading stories which stir such higher feelings as love, kindness, courage, joy, achievement, freedom.

8. *Proper orientation*, the portrayal of life in true perspective, is one of the highest functions of literature.

The methods used in making this guide are given as follows:

1. Establishment of a workshop for comparative study of literature.
2. Assembling of all offerings, published in English, which seemed possible candidates.
3. Employment on a full-time schedule of a staff of readers.
4. Clearly defined set of standards.
5. Insistence that all material must have independent judgment of at least three readers before being included.
6. Periodic statistical checks on all readers to determine the extent of agreements.
7. Weighting of readers' judgments to make them comparable.
8. Special study of any material showing a wide disagreement.
9. Final editing in the light of the whole process and range of judgments.

After examining all available lists of books for children's reading, also catalogues, bulletins and weeklies, some 2,000 volumes were selected for study. The Book List which is the main part of the present volume presents 663 titles judged worthy of commendation.

The titles are classified according to the situations with which they deal, they are ranked according to degree of excellence, they are described with reference to their subject matter and the attitudes they portray, and they are placed according to school grade.

The first three books having highest rank for each of the lower grades are as follows:

GRADES I-III

Johnny Blossom, by Dikken Zwilgmeyer (Emilie Poullon translator).

Susanna's Auction, anonymous.

Annetje and her Family, by Dorothy Lyman Leetch.

GRADE IV

Blue Magic, by Ethel Ballinger Price.

Chi-Wee, by Grace Moon.

Little Tonino, by Helen Hill and Violet Maxwell.

GRADE V

Beyond the Hills, by Maysel Jenkinson.

Bird's Christmas Carol, by Kate Douglas Wiggin.

Donkey John of the Toy Valley, by Margaret Warner Morley.

GRADE VI

Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates, by Mary Mapes Dodge.

Otto of the Silver Hand, by Howard Pyle. Katrinka, by Helen Eggleston Haskell.

Opportunities for Reading Among Farm Children.—A very careful and long-continued investigation* of the environmental conditions and the development of farm children has just been published by the late Dr. Baldwin and his two co-workers in this study. The study reports the significant differences which were found between the children of the rural communities (which at the beginning of the study were thought to be "equally typical" and also between children of rural and urban communities.

The measurements taken, many of which were repeated for several years, are such factors in the farm child's environment as condition of homes, of schools, of farm equipment, facts concerning church and community institutions, education of parents and teachers, and amount of insurance per family. Measurements and facts are presented concerning the physical welfare of mother, preschool child and school child, including data on health history, medical and dental examinations, nutritional status and anthropometric development. Mental examinations with verbal and non-verbal tests were made, as well as tests of the child's educational achievement, musical talent and speech characteristics. Careful comparisons are made of the education of children in one-room and consolidated schools. The study will well repay reading by any teacher whose work touches the life of rural communities.

Among other aspects of educational development the authors investigate the opportunities for reading open to farm children.

When the number of books in the homes (about 250) of families with children were investigated it was found that the average number of books in the home library in one community was 48 and in the other 95. Eighty-three per cent of the homes in the first and 88 per cent in the latter contained books. The

* Baldwin, Bird T., Fillmore, Eva Abigail, and Hadley, Lara. *Farm Children: An Investigation of Rural Child Life in Selected Areas of Iowa*. New York, Appleton, 1930. Pp. xxii, 337.

average number of magazines taken in the homes of the two communities was 2.4 and 2.6, respectively. "Observation (in one community) indicated that many of these home libraries were random collections, including many books that were unattractive and perhaps never read." The yearly amount of money spent for books by the majority of people in one community was \$5.00 (or even less), while in the other community the average amount for ten families was ten dollars. In the first community the people reported little use of a public library in a near-by village, and only eighteen per cent borrowed books from the church or school library. In the other community forty-four per cent of the families said they borrowed books from the library, their choices including travel, biography and history, as well as fiction.

Facts concerning the school libraries are also reported. When the libraries of six one-room schools were surveyed it was found that twenty-four per cent of the 470 titles were not to be found on the six authoritative lists recommended for children to which the investigators referred. "The number, quality and

condition of books in the libraries seemed one of the most serious drawbacks of the one-room school. The young children who had a great deal of spare time for which there was no provision could well have spent it in becoming acquainted with books had there been any within their range of comprehension. Older children could have supplemented their text-book reading . . . if the proper books had been at hand."

When the titles were checked against the First Three Hundred Books for the Children's Library, chosen by Clara Whitehill Hunt, only eleven of the books recommended for young children and twelve of the books for older children were found among the 470 titles! The library in one of the consolidated schools which was surveyed revealed a somewhat better choice of books, yet, still there was a dearth of books of especial worth for children.

In considering the advantages and disadvantages of farm life for children the authors include the following statement: "Poverty of reading material in the home and many of the one-room schools often stifled any desire to read which the children may have had."



(Continued from page 159)

LEFEVRE, FELICITE: *Little Henry and the Tiger*; il. by Erick Berry, Harper, 1931. \$1.50.

A new story by the gifted writer is something to anticipate.

LENSKI, LOIS: *Benny and his Penny*; il. by the author. Knopf, 1931. \$2.00.

A story that deals with a typical childhood experience.

McCoy, NEELY: *Jupie and the Wise Old Owl*; il. by the author. Macmillan, 1931. \$1.75.

The children who have been so enthusiastic about *The Tale of the Good Cat Jupie* will rejoice to meet Jupie, Jean, and the Squirrel again.

ORTON, HELEN FULLER: *The City Mrs. Winkle Built*; il. by Luxor Price. Stokes, 1931. \$1.00.

PERKINS, LUCY FITCH: *The Indian Twins*; il. by the author. Houghton, 1931. \$1.75.

The 20th in the series of "Twins" books. Like its predecessors it is well told, although tribal customs seem to be mixed and interchanged more than anthropologists would approve.

SLOAN, ELEANOR V.: *All Sorts of Good Stories*; il. by Blanche Greer. Dutton, 1930. \$2.00.

A collection of stories about the everyday experiences of children told with an understanding of the child's point of view. Good for reading aloud.

ST. CLAIR, MABELLE H.: *Max: The Story of a Little Black Bear*; il. by Lee Townsend. Harcourt, 1931. \$2.00.

A rarely good story of one year in the life of a bear who "looked rather like an inverted comma."



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playing with the finished project and taking it down again keeps the entire group alert every minute. Gone are dull days, restlessness and inattention vanish. There is always something doing and that of sound educational value.

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